

One foot in front of the other

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by [orphan_account](#)

Summary

Tommy and Tubbo adjust to life no longer living confined in the cabin Dream trapped them in. Everyone would watch fondly as they ran around laughing and playing. Sometimes it was easy to forget they were still healing.

Dream wasn't done with them yet either

+ Ranboo and SBI angst eventually :)

Notes

See the end of the work for [notes](#)

Green

It had been around a month now since the two leaders got their sons back. The boys both clicked into their family's dynamics well for being kidnapped as babies. They also refused to be separated for long. So it was normal to see the two jump between the lands. They'd spend a few days in the Antarctic Empire and then a few in Manberg. Sometimes they'd be apart but that rarely lasted long. Nevermore than three days.

Tommy had a room in Jschlatt's white house and Tubbo had one in Phil's castle. Their kingdoms bond became closer over the friendship. Their guards teamed up with a few of the neighboring kingdom's to hunt for Dream. On Tommy's birthday he had disappeared after Techno went to save Tommy. They searched for a while but there was no trace of him. Not on the cliff, not in the cabin, not even in his own kingdom. His kingdom was currently being run by his friend, someone named Bad, who claimed he had no knowledge of Tommy and Tubbo nor the cabin.

It was weird for the two to have so much freedom. Not only were their new houses way bigger than their small cabin, they didn't even need to stay in them! The two constantly tried new things and explored every inch of their new homes. Finally acting like kids. Everyone would watch fondly as they ran around laughing and playing. Sometimes it was easy to forget they were still healing.

Tubbo was over at the Antarctic Empire with Tommy this time. The family all sat around the dinner table eating potatoes that Techno had grown in his spare time. The pig hadn't really left the kingdom to do anything since Tommy came, other than look for Dream. Usually, he'd constantly be in and out on random quests. For now he wanted to stay near Tommy. The meal was ate with a constant stream of chatter and laughter between the family members. Tommy was playfully making fun of Techno. The banter grew to be a little much and Phil decided to try and defuse the situation before food got thrown. "Tommy getting kidnapped for sixteen years doesn't make you exempt from the rules. Keep it up mate and you can go to your room."

His tone was lighthearted but he knew he had done something wrong when Tommy's fork hit his plate with a loud clang. The three eldest at the table looked at the boys in alarm. Their eyes both seemed to be clouded over and Tubbo had shrunk into his seat. His breathing sped slightly. Wilbur, who was sat next to Tubbo, put his hand on the boy's trembling arm. Tubbo flinched violently and squeezed his eyes shut. "I'm sorry I'm sorry" he breathed out shakily. Something was definitely wrong.

Phil stood from his chair. Wilbur retracted his hand and looked unsure of what to do. The king motioned for his two eldest sons to leave. They begrudgingly complied and Phil slowly made his way around the table to stand next to Tubbo. Tommy blinked and seemed to refocus on the world around him. "Tubbo?" Phil asked while crouching down. Tubbo flinched again and put his arms around his head. Shielding himself from Phil, the glimpse of the man's green clothes sent him further into his panicked state. He saw someone who wasn't really

there. "I'll do better sir *please*" his frame trembled. Expecting a raised hand to swing down any second. Something inside of Phil broke. Tubbo wasn't his son like Tommy was but he cared for him just as much.

They had been through hell and Phil felt so terrible over it. He wished he could take their pain away. He'd gladly bear the burden of the memories if it were possible. Tommy was standing now. He gently grabbed Tubbo's arms and pulled them from his head. Tubbo looked up at Tommy's eyes and his face shifted from afraid to trusting. Phil wanted to comfort the boy but he knew Tommy was the only one who could when he panicked. "It's okay Tubbo" Tommy pulled him into a hug. "You're okay. We're okay."

It was two days later when they ate dinner that Phil asked about the incident. Tubbo had gone back to Manberg that day and it was only a matter of time before Tommy left to go there too. "What set Tubbo off the other night?" He asked. The table got rather quite as all eyes landed on him. Tommy's gaze was skeptical. Phil backtracks quickly, "Not that it matters of course. He doesn't need a 'valid' reason to have a reaction like that. I just wanted to know so I could avoid repeating it in the future".

He wasn't exactly sure he wanted to hear another reason to feel angry and guilty. Another reason to hunt down Dream. The list had already grown fairly long in such a short amount of time. He needed to know though. He wanted Tommy and Tubbo to feel as safe and as comfortable as possible. That required knowing what made them feel the opposite.

He knew by now they didn't like feeling trapped. That was one of the reasons he let Tommy leave so frequently despite just getting his son back. It'd be selfish to force him to stay in the Antarctic Empire. He also knew Tommy didn't like fire. Tubbo, of course, didn't like fast movements and raised voices. He also noticed the subtler things, like the fact Tubbo didn't like to be watched while he did things. Even if what he was doing was simple, like putting food on his plate. The eyes made him visibly uncomfortable. So Phil told the twins and they all did their best to accommodate.

Tommy looked down at his plate and shuffled his food around with his fork. It was an uncomfortable subject Phil assumed. Anything to do with what happened to them was really. Tubbo was a bit more open about it, especially to Schlatt, but Tommy hated talking about what happened. He was too prideful to openly admit to being a victim. Too shameful to admit the things that happened to Tubbo while he sat by and watched. Phil told him being the victim was okay, and that there was no need to feel guilty. It wasn't his fault after all. Tommy only half heartedly agreed.

"It was when you said something about me going to my room." Tommy started. Phil knew that was what he said but he hadn't been sure if that was the reason. "Was it because he thought he'd be alone without you?" Wilbur asked. A small frown on the brown haired boys face. Tommy shook his head. "No. I mean- kind of but" he cut himself off as his fingers twitched nervously under the table.

The adults in the room waited patiently for him to continue. "It's because well, when we lived with Dream" Phil's jaw clenched at the mention of Dream, but he also happily noted the

way Tommy no longer referred to him as “*my brother*” Tommy looked up at Phil. “He’d always send me to my room right before um, before he’d hurt Tubbo.” *Oh*. Phil could feel the rage emanating from Techno beside him.

The king looked at Tommy sadly. So, when he mentioned Tommy going to his room, Tubbo had thought he was Dream again. He tried to not let it get to him any time Tubbo mistook him for Dream. Tubbo trusted Phil, of course, but that trust can easily be forgotten when you can’t even recognize your surroundings over the panic that seizes in your chest. He hoped one day Tubbo would be able to tell the difference. Maybe he’d wear less green.

Expensive suits and precious smiles

Chapter Summary

Take the dadschlatt fluff :<

Tubbo stood nervously outside of his dad's office door. His hand raised and lowered a few times. All he had to do was knock- *why was it so hard?* He was supposed to tell Schlatt when he came back, the President said something about taking Tubbo to do something after he finished working.

Tubbo knocked on the door.

"Come in," Schlatt said, muffled slightly. Tubbo pushed the door open and walked into the room closing it behind him. His eyes on the floor. "Hey, there kiddo," Schlatt said warmly. Tubbo could practically hear the soft smile on his face and looked up at his dad. Schlatt motioned him over and he walked to his father's side. The older ram flashed him a wide smile and stood, pulling Tubbo into a strong hug. Always hugging Tubbo as tight as possible without hurting him.

Tubbo's arms wrapped around his dad's torso as he buried his face into the man's chest. It was still unusual to him, the constant affection everyone openly gave him. He always welcomed it.

"I have a few more papers to sign but after that, it'll be me and you. I think we should get some lunch and then go to the shop. What do you say Tubs?" He asked. A choice, another unusual thing to Tubbo. He offered a small smile and nodded his head.

They stood awkwardly for a moment as Tubbo gripped the end of his sleeves. A question in his mind he was too nervous to ask. "You can go do whatever kids do these days until I'm done." His dad said, waving his hand. Tubbo stopped biting down on his tongue, something he didn't even know he was doing until then. "Can I uh- can I stay in here? Until you're done?" He asked quietly. A moment of silence passed and he wondered, briefly, if he shouldn't have said anything. Maybe he should have just left. But then the President's smile just widened. "Of course you can," the man said as he ruffled Tubbo's hair. Schlatt pulled a chair over from the front of his desk and set it down next to his.

Tubbo curled up in the chair, knees to his chest as Schlatt worked. He watched silently as his dad read the documents and signed on the lines. After around 5 minutes he leaned his head over and rested it on Schlatt's arm. The President paused and looked at him fondly. If the older ram minded, he didn't say anything.

Tubbo sat like that for another half an hour nearly falling asleep. He was brought out of his peaceful state when the door slammed open. One of the White House workers stood in the doorway. Tubbo had jolted at the sudden noise and sat up straight. His dad glanced at him worriedly before turning and glaring at the worker. The guy in the doorway looked between Schlatt and Tubbo a moment.

“Oh- I Uhm sorry for interrupting Mr. President but” the man stumbled over his words a bit. Schlatt set his pen down. “What is it?” He asked, obviously annoyed. “There has been a report of someone claiming to have seen King Dream, or someone who fits the description anyways, heading east of here.” Tubbo froze as Schlatt stood up.

“Well did you send someone to investigate it?” Schlatt asked louder than he intended. He didn’t want anyone wasting any time. The guy in the doorway nodded quickly. “The Vice President has already sent a few guards towards the area and a message was sent to King Philza” Schlatt pinched the bridge of his nose and tilted his head up “okay, okay. I’ll deal with this later. Let Quackity handle it for now.” The worker left the room.

Schlatt looked down at Tubbo. He had curled in on himself slightly and his furry ram ears were all the way down. His son looked up at him with wide fearful but trusting eyes. He opted to brush a few of the boy’s messy curls out of his face, keeping his hand on his son’s head after Tubbo leaned into the touch, and gave him a reassuring smile. “I finished my paperwork anyway. Ready to go kiddo?” He asked. Tubbo’s ears perked up as he smiled and stood up.

The two left the white house and walked together to the restaurant. A few of the citizens waved as they passed by. Everyone knew by now about Tubbo and in extension Tommy. Word had traveled fast. Tubbo was always slightly overwhelmed by the eyes that would watch him whenever he walked through Manberg.

They entered Schlatt’s favorite restaurant. The two had eaten there a few times. Tommy had even joined them before. Tubbo tried something new every time, there were so many things he never had before. Schlatt insisted he didn’t care about the price. “So how was the Antarctic Empire?” Schlatt asked. Tubbo looked up from his plate and hesitated before answering. “It was fun. I and Tommy went to this bakery, I had a donut for the first time. It had chocolate frosting and sprinkles. The woman who worked there was nice. Her name was Niki and Tommy insisted Wilbur likes her but I’m not sure”

His sentence trailed off as he realized he was rambling. The ram boy looked up at Schlatt half expecting to be met with cold glaring eyes. That wasn’t what he saw, of course, instead, the president stared down at him smiling softly. “I’m glad you’re having fun,” he said. They finished their food as Tubbo continued to ramble on about the Antarctic empire and whatever thoughts came to mind afterward. Schlatt sat and listened the whole time. Partially because he cared and wanted to know about everything his son was doing while he was gone, partially because he wanted Tubbo to understand he was allowed to talk, to ramble. Even now, a month later, he still struggled with things like that. It was a slow process but he was healing.

They walked to what Tubbo assumed was a clothing store. He had been to one with Schlatt before at the beginning of the month. His dad insisting on getting him as much clothing as he

wanted. His new closet had a variety of clothes. He had a new green shirt, similar to his old one. His favorite shirt was his sweater that was yellow with dark brown stripes.

This clothing store was different though. All of the clothing was fancier, dresses, and suits. The fabric was thrown slightly about and a few workers rushed around with different sewing supplies. Schlatt led him past them and into a back room. It was cleaner than the front of the store and had a small box in front of mirrors. “What are we doing?” Tubbo curiously asked, tilting his head.

“We’re getting you fitted in a suit kiddo,” Schlatt said and he pats his back lightly. Tubbo frowned slightly. “A suit?” His dad wore suits all the time, but he was the President. Why did Tubbo need a suit? A man walked in carrying a smaller suit that looked like it would fit Tubbo.

“You need a suit for my wedding” Schlatt hummed. Tubbo looked up at him with wide eyes. “Oh,” he didn’t know he’d go. Sure, he knew his dad was getting married to Quackity, but he never considered the fact that he’d get to go too.

The process was kind of uncomfortable but two hours later he stood on the little box in a perfectly fitted suit. He glanced down at the tie around his neck. “Dad?” Schlatt turned to him. The President always immediate to respond whenever Tubbo said, dad. “Can I have a green tie?” Schlatt went over to the ties that sat in a box and grabbed a green one before walking back over to him. “Of course! Green fits you better anyway.” Tubbo had pulled the red one off and Schlatt tied the green one for Tubbo.

Schlatt stared down at his son and pride filled his heart. Here Tubbo was 16, wearing a suit, looking all grown up. He was grown up, perhaps more than he should have been at his age, and Schlatt couldn’t be prouder. He ignored the small number of tears that he felt in the corners of his eyes and pulled Tubbo into a hug. He rested one of his hands on the back of the boy’s head.

He had dreamed of moments like this before. Holding his son in his arms, taking Tubbo to do things like getting a suit. Moments he might have taken for granted if Tubbo was never taken. He planted a quick kiss on the top of Tubbo’s head before pulling away and smiled down at his son once again. Tubbo looked up at him happily. Schlatt realized then, he’d do anything for that smile.

Nightmares (not very pog)

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

After they came back from getting his suit Schlatt went to talk to Quackity. The President decided then that it would be best if he went to the Antarctic Empire. He'd meet with King Philza and the two would plan on how to handle Dream. Philza apparently had sent a few of his own guards forward behind Schlatt's. It was only a matter of time before they returned. There was a possibility Dream wouldn't be with them but they wanted to be ready just in case.

So Schlatt canceled his meetings and gave temporary control of the country to Quackity. He hugged Tubbo goodbye and promised to return as soon as possible. Since the guards would be returning to the Antarctic Empire, Schlatt didn't want Tubbo there. The ram boy was sad to see his dad leave just as he returned home but he understood.

He ate dinner with just Quackity that night. While he wasn't directly related to the Vice President, Quackity acted a lot like Schlatt towards him. Ruffling his hair and giving him kind smiles. He was a bit more like Tommy too though, poking fun at him on occasion. It never failed to make him laugh.

He curled up in his big comfortable bed and drifted off to sleep. A nightmare filled his mind, a memory really, one that ruined his peace of mind. It was an old one from when him and Tommy were little, around 8 or 9. *Tommy was getting a snack from the kitchen and he accidentally knocked a cup onto the floor. The sound of glass shattering filled the small house and Tubbo made his way into the kitchen. He went to ask if Tommy was okay but Dream appeared in the doorway.*

"Tommy?" His voice was stern. Tommy's body went rigid as he stared up at his older brother who was glaring down at him. "It was an accident." Tommy explained quickly. Dream's eyes traveled from the cup, to Tommy and then to Tubbo's face. Tubbo's ears and eyes lowered. "Go to your room." He said slowly. He was looking at Tubbo, but they all knew who it was directed at. Tommy walked down to his room and closed the door looking at the ground sadly. At the time he was completely oblivious to what would happen next.

"Well? Pick it up." Dream hissed to the ram boy. Tubbo scrambled forward and sank to his knees to collect the pieces. There weren't any small ones, which was good. He almost had it all picked up when a foot slammed into his side. He whimpered quietly, free hand clutching his torso while the other closed around the glass in his hand making small cuts. "Useless little thing" The green man muttered as he stared down at Tubbo.

Tubbo ignored the pain and got up. He made his way over to the trash and discarded the pieces. Dream stood, waiting, so he made his way back over with his head down submissively. "Tubbo" "Yes sir?"

"Why did the glass break?" Dream took a step toward him. Tubbo thought a moment before answering. "Because Tommy knocked it over." He said, figuring it was the only logical answer. That was what happened after all. It was the wrong answer. A harsh slap sent him stumbling back a bit. "Are you implying that it was Tommy's fault?" Dream accused. Tubbo frantically shook his head. "No- no. It was an accident like he said."

"Who's fault was it?" Dream asked. Tubbo knew what he wanted him to say, it was what he always wanted him to say, but it wasn't true. "It was an accident" he repeated. "Tubbo who's fault was it?" Dream asked slightly louder. He raised his hand backward again and Tubbo flinched squeezing his eyes shut. "Mine" he whimpered. A moment passed. Dream's hand gripped Tubbo's face rather harshly and tilted it up towards his. The touch wasn't kind, but Tubbo still leaned into the hand slightly.

Dream noticed this and softened his hold. He lowered his voice. "That's right. And how was it your fault Tubbo?" The ram boy thought for a moment. "Because.. because I should have gotten the snack for Tommy." His answer sounded more like a question. Dream straightened and his hand pulled away from Tubbo's face. The boy remained tense and stared at the floor again. Dream's hand was set on the top of his head patting it once. Tubbo winced. "Good boy" Dream practically cooed.

Tubbo sat up in bed with wide eyes. His body trembling as terrified tears streamed down his face. It was just a dream, he was fine. He was fine. He was in Manberg with his dad. His dad- dad wasn't here. Tubbo's arms wrapped around himself and he sobbed. His dad wasn't here but he wanted him. He wanted him to hug him and tell him it'd be okay. He wanted- he was out of bed in seconds. He made his way to his dad's bedroom. Schlatt wasn't here, he was in the Antarctic Empire, but

"Quackity?" Tubbo asked. The man seemed startled as he turned to the boy. "Toobo?" He asked rubbing his tired eyes. "What are you doing out of bed." He took a step forward and noticed the trembling in Tubbo's frame. The tears that filled his eyes. His drowsiness was lost instantly as he became panicked. "What happened?" He was at Tubbo's side instantly and gently pulled the boy into the room. Tubbo clung to Quackity's waist and sobbed.

The Vice President hesitated a moment, arms up making room for Tubbo. After a bit of debate he slowly wrapped them around the boy returning the hug. He couldn't see Tubbo's eyes anymore but the wetness of his shirt was an indication he was still crying. Besides, you know, the sobbing. He ran his hand through the boy's hair and whispered comforting words in Spanish. By the time Tubbo calmed down he was slumped into Quackity's chest, tired.

He led the drowsy boy back to his room. He couldn't pick him up, not like Schlatt could. So he just let Tubbo lean on him. When Tubbo was safely back under the covers Quackity looked at him worridley wondering what caused him to freak out so much. A question for the morning.

"I'm sorry" Tubbo's voice quivered. Quackity rubbed the back of his neck. "It's fine Tubbo. You can always come to me if you need to. Or Schlatt." Tubbo looked up at him before his eyes slid closed. He mumbled "thank you" and Quackity took that as his moment to leave. He glanced at the boy again and smiled softly as he closed the door.

He never met Tubbo before his disappearance. He had only met Schlatt a few years later, during his lowest point. When he and Schlatt started dating he was perfectly content with a childless relationship. He knew Schlatt wouldn't want another child, not even through adoption. Now that Tubbo was in his life Quackity couldn't be happier. He knew Schlatt was too. The ram hybrid told him the other night that just hearing Tubbo call him dad made his heart lighter.

Schlatt made it to the Antarctic Empire. As he made his way to the meeting room Tommy appeared beside him. "Is Tubbo here?" He asked quickly grabbing Schlatt's arm. Wilbur grabbed the boy and pulled him away. "Sorry about him" he said as Tommy squirmed in his grip. "Fuck off asshole" he cursed at his brother. Schlatt couldn't help but smile at the interaction. "Tubbo stayed in Manberg." Tommy's face seemed to drop and Schlatt couldn't help but feel a little bad. It was for the best though. He was safest there.

He entered the meeting room and stood next to Phil. "It's been a while Schlatt" the king hummed. Schlatt frowned a bit. It had been a while, the two hadn't really been in the same place since the cabin. Speaking of which. "I wanted to apologize" Phil glanced at him raising an eyebrow. "For what I said. In the cabin."

Phil looked away again. "It was wrong" Schlatt continued. The king sighed. "It was. You were angry though, I understand." They looked at each other again. He was angry. With Dream, with himself. Phil smiled. "You apologized though, so that's all that matters." The door opened and Techno walked in looking anxious. One of Phil's guards at his side.

"Did you find him?" Phil asked immediately. The guard glanced at Schlatt and then looked back at the king. "We caught up with Schlatt's men near the place he was spotted." He started. Phil walked across the room and Schlatt followed. They now stood in front of Techno and the guard. "And? Was Dream there?" Phil questioned.

"Dream was there, but by the time we arrived it was too late. All of Schlatt's guards were found dead. A cracked smiley face mask in the snow near by"

Chapter End Notes

I hope you get emotional whiplash from this fic switching between fluff and angst

Baby Steps

Chapter Notes

This takes place during the last two chapters

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

It started with a guitar.

Tommy had been looking for Wilbur and Techno. With Tubbo being gone he was rather bored. He walked into Wilbur's bedroom but he wasn't there. So he looked around the room. Wilbur's room was more decorated than Techno's. Different pictures and albums covered his wall.

His eyes landed in a guitar in the corner. He had never actually seen one in person before, but he'd seen them in books. Tommy picked it up gently, held it to his chest, and strummed. It sounded weird, how do you play these things again? He strummed again while frowning. "Tommy?" A voice called from the doorway.

He jumped slightly and turned to Wilbur. His brother was looking at him with an amused expression. "What are you doing?"

Tommy looked down at the guitar in his hands again. He was slightly embarrassed now, being caught playing it. Wilbur just walked to his side and smiled. "If you wanted to learn you could have asked." Tommy looked up at him with wide eyes. Dream rarely taught him things like this. He'd leave Tommy to learn on his own, or Tommy simply wouldn't learn at all.

"Would you?" He pushed the guitar out towards Wilbur. The brunette took it into his arms and adjusted the little gray knobs at the top. Tommy waited in anticipation. He always loved music.

Wilbur played a song for him, as a demonstration. Then he took Tommy through the different chords. By the end of it the boy forgot most of them but neither cared. Tommy just wanted to spend time with his brother. The whole afternoon soon when by.

Tommy wanted to play the song that had played on his birthday. Apparently the disc was found by Techno a little bit before his birthday. Wilbur memorized the song and showed Tommy how to do it. The blonde played a few chords correctly as his brother watched. Wilbur ruffled Tommy's hair. "I love you Toms"

"I love you too Dream"

His response was automatic. Wilbur's hand pulled away from Tommy's hair quickly, as if it were burnt, and Tommy paled. He turned to Wilbur suddenly. "No I-" His older brother looked down at him with wide eyes. The entire mood of the room shifted. Tommy cursed at himself. Of course this happened, of course he said that. He fucked everything up.

"I'm sorry Wilbur I didn't mean that I don't know why I even said that I know you aren't him and I don't love him but I love you and I meant to say you I meant to say Wilbur please I didn't-" the words tumbled from his mouth so fast Wilbur froze. His ramble was cut off when Wilbur pulled him into a hug. "Tommy, Tommy it's okay." His hand returned to Tommy's hair.

Tommy hid his embarrassed face in his brother's torso. He was so used to it, saying '*I love you too Dream.*' whenever Dream said he loved him. The words had lost meaning to him. They were just something he said to appease the masked man. Something he said to avoid his anger. Some days he meant it, some days he didn't. He said it either way.

He hadn't said it in a long time though. Why did he say it now? Tommy thought he was better by now. It had been so long so why was he still making stupid mix ups like that?

Wilbur told Phil about it. Tommy wanted to be mad, but he knew why Wilbur did it. He couldn't help but feel a little betrayed. "No one expects you to heal overnight" Phil said as he sat on the edge of Tommy's bed. "But it's been a whole month" he insisted. A month! That was plenty of time to 'heal'. He didn't even need much healing Tommy thought. Dream never hurt him. Why did he need to heal?

"Healing takes time Tommy. Especially after 16 years of trauma. You need to take your time. We'll be here to support you. Just focus on the baby steps. Focus on putting one foot in front of the other." Tommy wrinkled his nose. He had no idea what his dad was talking about. He nodded anyways.

Did he need to heal? Tubbo definitely did but Tommy wasn't Tubbo. They did both react again the dinner table the other night. They both had nightmares and panic attacks. But *why*? Tommy had it so easy with Dream why did he act so broken? Was he doing it subconsciously? For pity? For attention? "Tommy" Phil said looking down at him with hardened but still kind eyes. It was as if he heard Tommy's thoughts.

"Dream hurt you. He just did it in a subtle way. It's okay to be affected by it" Tommy made a noise of agreement but he wasn't sure it was genuine. Phil stood and walked to the door. "Goodnight Toms" he said as he walked out of the room. Tommy paused a moment so his response wasn't automatic. "Goodnight"

Tommy stared at his ceiling. So many conflicting thoughts swarmed through his head. He ~~was fine~~. Maybe he'd go see Tubbo again tomorrow. Tubbo was the one who needed healing. Tubbo need him, the clingy bitch boy he was. *He needed Tubbo. He needed Tubbo, he needed to heal. He was fine.*

Dream stood over the dead bodies of the Manberg guards. It was rather easy taking them all out. He was on his way to his hidden base to try to avoid interactions like these. He realized though, he still needed Tommy. He had to get the child back. Until his mission was accomplished at least, then he could dispose of him. But Tommy was in the center of the Antarctic Empire in a castle with two of the world's strongest fighters beyond Dream himself. Surrounded by guards. Tommy was untouchable at the moment. He sheathed his bloodied sword.

Tommy wasn't an option. Not yet. There was still a plan B. Dream turned on his heels and walked in the direction of Manberg.

Chapter End Notes

Thinking about writing a few more pre-reunited oneshots like Phil and Schlatt grieving after losing their kids + maybe their reactions to finding out they were taken. I also kinda want to write a oneshot about Dream bringing Tubbo to the cabin and him meeting Tommy.

Fake comfort

Chapter Summary

Suffer :)

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Tubbo was in the living room standing in front of the fire. He held a bowl of pretzels in his hands as he waited to hear news about his dad or the Dream situation. He hummed quietly to himself watching the flames. He enjoyed the soft flow and warmth it provided. The window opened and he turned. The bowl shattered when it hit the ground.

Tubbo stumbled back into the wall as far away from the figure who entered the room as possible. He looked up at Dream as terror settled into the pit of his stomach. Dream stared at him silently a moment, his usual mask was gone leaving Tubbo to stare at his white eyes. The light was behind him leaving his face in a shadow. No- no no no he can't be here. Tubbo's back hits the wall. Dream can't be here. The figure took a step forward.

The door opened and Quackity stood in the doorway holding an axe tightly in his grip. "Tubbo?" Ha called frantically. The Vice President saw Dream. He was in front of Tubbo, who was trembling now, instantly. Dream watched him and unsheathed his sword. He started to cross the room slowly. Quackity put his free arm up protecting Tubbo further. "Stay back you asshole" he growled.

Dream continued walking forward. Quackity raised the axe but Dream disarmed him instantly. "You-" Dream's sword pierced through his stomach. Tubbo cried out as Quackity dropped to the floor. "Sorry Mr. Vice President, I'd love to play but I'm on a tight schedule." Dream smiled down at him with a cruel glint in his eyes.

"Quackity" Tubbo sobbed as he reached to him. Dream's hand clamped down on his wrist and yanked him away. Quackity struggled on the floor to stand up but he fell back down. "Don't fucking touch him" he yelled while glaring at Dream. His voice was slurred. Dream just ignored Quackity as he forcefully dragged Tubbo all the way to the window. He pulled an enderpearl out and tossed it through the opening. The last thing Quackity saw before he blacked out was Tubbo's terrified face as they disappeared and guards entering the room.

Tubbo and Dream reappeared in the trees near the white house. With his hand still on Tubbo's wrist he grabbed the boy's neck. It wasn't hard enough to hurt really, or to cause any damage. Tubbo still froze completely at the grip. Dream glared down at him. "Don't make a

single sound” he commanded quietly. Tubbo silenced immediately as Dream released his wrist and grabbed a potion from his bag. Shifting his hand from the boy’s neck to his jaw he forced Tubbo to drink part of the potion.

Tubbo’s skin tingled a moment before he disappeared. Dream downed the rest of the bottle. He let go of Tubbo’s neck and pulled the boy in front of him. He put one arm over Tubbo’s chest and one over Tubbo’s mouth. Guards walked around them searching frantically but they walked completely undetected. When they were far enough away and the potion had worn off Dream removed his hand from Tubbo’s mouth.

He stopped walking a moment and grabbed Tubbo’s wrists in one hand. He wrapped a lead around them and yanked it tightly. Tubbo whimpered at the force. He walked forward pulling Tubbo along. Tubbo followed the best he could on shaky legs. His mind and heart were racing. He was alone with Dream.

What did Dream want with him? If Dream targeted Tommy he’d understand but why did Dream want *him*? Tubbo thought Dream hated him, always saying how much of a burden he was. He looked at the back of the man’s hood as they walked forward. The terrain shifted into a biome he didn’t recognize.

They entered a stone brick base that lead underground. Tubbo looked at the restraints to see if there was a way to free his hands. He was pulled into a room and Dream tied the end of the lead to some iron bars. Tubbo tensed when he stepped away from the knot, but instead of approaching him Dream turned and left. Tubbo stood silently unsure of what to do. He tried to free his hands again but he only ended up hurting his wrist’s further. He looked around the room but it was bare. No furniture.

Tubbo shivered. Did Dream plan on just leaving him here? Footsteps approached again. His entire body tensed and his eyes found the floor just like they used to. A habit he had finally started to break returning. He couldn’t stop the tears that filled his eyes nor the few that escaped and rolled down his face. He hadn’t realized how terrifying being alone with Dream was until now. How had he done it so much in the past.

A gloved hand grabbed his chin and tilted it upwards. He expected to see Dream glaring at him, but instead the man looked down at him softly. “My Tubbo I’m so glad to have you back safely.” What? He said it in that sweet voice he’d use with Tommy. Tubbo looked at Dream and frowned confused.

Dream cupped his face in both hands. Despite not being as touch starved as before Tubbo couldn’t stop himself from leaning into the touch. He couldn’t stop himself from finding a small comfort in the hands. It was different coming from Dream, coming from someone he spent 12 years trying to appease. “I’m sorry Tubbo you poor little thing” now that was especially weird. Dream had *never* apologized for anything to him before. “I was so hard on you Tubbo it was unfair of me. Especially on the cliff. You were trying your best weren’t you? I bet you didn’t even want to leave but Tommy forced you to. Isn’t that right Tubsy?” His tone remained sweet.

Tubbo couldn’t speak over the lump in his throat. He was afraid and confused. He opted to nod in response. Dream’s hands stopped cupping his face. “It’s okay now pet.” He smiled and

tapped Tubbo's nose with his finger. Tubbo leaned away from him. "I brought you back. We just need Tommy and we can be a family again."

Tubbo frowned. Newfound courage filled him. "We have a family now. One that loves us and treats us correctly. You aren't a part of it." He practically spat at Dream. The man's smile fell and he stared at Tubbo for a few moments. Tubbo didn't even see Dream's hand move before he was struck in the jaw. He yelped and didn't have time to compose himself before Dream hit him in the eye. His arms yanked upwards to grab his face but they were held in place by the rope. He felt another hit to his face. He cried out again as another wave of tears fell from his eyes. A hand gripped his hair and yanked his head up so it was face to face with Dream.

"Ungrateful brat" he snapped "I try being nice and you still talk back" Tubbo looked up at Dream silently. He was still confused. Why did Dream act nice only to hurt him. Maybe he shouldn't have said that to Dream, he should have bite his tongue. But what he said was true? Dream's hold on his hair lessened and he was pulled into a hug. He didn't find comfort in the touch this time. He stood stiff in Dream's arms.

"Don't worry Tubbo. I'll fix you again. I'll get Tommy and we can be a family just like before." This time Tubbo didn't say anything. The word 'fix' terrified him. Dream hugging him was terrifying. Dream stabbing Quackity- panic rose in his chest. Quackity, was Quackity okay? His breath caught in his throat and he felt like crying again but he had no tears left.

The older released Tubbo from the hug and pat his cheek. "I'll be back Tubbo. Be a good boy and stay right here." He turned and left. Tubbo mentally scoffed, his wrists were bound to the iron bars and he had no idea how to leave this place. It's not like he had anywhere else to go. He sat on the floor and touched his face lightly with his hands now that the were closer. He winced at the contact. He wanted his dad again. He wanted to leave he wanted to feel safe. Surely his dad would find out he was gone and save him right? Techno, Philza, and Wilbur too. He pulled his knees to his chest. Surely they would.

Chapter End Notes

Me : Mentions oneshot ideas and looks for feedback
The comments : BARK BARK

Missing

When a guard came in and informed the two rulers Manberg had been attacked, they were out the door instantly. They made it to Manberg faster than either ever had before. Neither of them were given specific details other than the attack itself, and the attacker being suspected to have been Dream.

Schlatt's heart nearly beat out of his chest when he entered the Manberg hospital. He never thought Dream would attack Manberg. He slammed the door open and the nurses pointed him in the right direction. They already knew where he was meant to go. The whole time he didn't lessen his pace. Phil followed closely behind. Schlatt's mind was swirling. Tubbo had to be fine- he *promised* Tubbo he'd be safe in Manberg. When he was told to go to the hospital his heart had dropped.

He entered the room he was told to go to. When noticing the frantic President everyone moved out of the way. He was at the bedside instantly and looked down at his fiancé. The Vice President was shirtless and his torso was wrapped in a bandage. "What happened?" He asked. A doctor appeared at his side.

"He was stabbed but we treated him quick enough for it to not cause any real damage." He explained. He didn't need to say who had done it. Schlatt grabbed Quackity's hand and held it gently. A few of the extra guards and nurses left the room. Schlatt took a deep breath. Quackity would be fine. He was hurt but he'd be fine. Tubbo was- "Where is Tubbo?" He asked turning to the doctor.

He worried for Tubbo. He'd be here with Quackity if he was okay wouldn't he? No he had to be in another room or something. He had to be. His son had to be okay. His son who he loved more than anything in the world besides his Fiancé, his son who he had only just got back. The boy he'd do anything for. He couldn't bear to have him taken away again.

Everyone's faces darkened other than Phil's. Schlatt tightened his grip on Quackity's hand. The fox hybrid guard stepped forward. "Mr. President-" he turned to him and cut him off. "Fundy **where is my son?**" No one would look at him other than Fundy and Phil anymore. Everyone had gone quite even the people in the hallway. They had heard him. Schlatt bit his tongue. He didn't mean to yell but he was panicking.

"Dream took him." The guard answered. Time seemed to slow. He didn't notice everything had felt so fast before. Phil inhaled sharply. He dropped Quackity's hand and took an unsteady step backwards. No- no Tubbo was okay. He *had to be* okay. He promised Tubbo. He promised..

Phil flew back to the Antarctic Empire. Schlatt had broken down after he heard the news. They needed to talk about what to do next but he knew nothing could really be discussed when the President was in a terrible head space. So he left and went back home. He was

greatly worried for Tubbo. Dream was alone with him. Was he even alive still? His stomach flipped and he got the urge to throw up. He pushed the thought away. Of course he was alive.

He'd have to tell Tommy. He knew his youngest would freak out. He'd probably want to go save Tubbo immediately but Phil knew he couldn't. They had no idea where Tubbo was taken, and he wanted to keep Tommy safe. Losing Tubbo was hard he couldn't imagine losing Tommy too.

The second he entered the castle Tommy latched himself onto Phil's arm. "Is Tubbo okay?" He asked. Wilbur and Techno walked over from behind him. All of them looked worried. Phil gave the twins a look and their eyes widened. "Tommy" Phil said after a moment. He looked down at Tommy sadly. The boy's face fell. "Tubbo is okay right?" He asked. Phil's heart broke all over again. How was he supposed to tell his son that his best friend got taken by the abuser the lived with almost their whole lives?

He pulled his arm from Tommy's grip and put his hands on the boys shoulders. He debated what to say. "Tubbo is.. missing." He decided. Tommy pushed Phil's hands away and took a step back. "Missing?" He demanded. Phil expected sadness from the boy, but Tommy's reaction was pure anger. "Dream took him"

Tommy's glare was almost enough to scare Phil. "Why are we here then? Why aren't you helping him?" He asked. Phil winced. Wilbur took a step forward and put his hand on Tommy's arm. "Toms-" Tommy smacked his hand away. "NO" he yelled.

Everyone jumped slightly at the sudden outburst. "Tubbo needs help why aren't you helping him?" He looked at Phil. When thinking of how this conversation might go, Phil hadn't prepared for this. He hadn't thought Tommy would get so angry. "We don't know where he is Tommy"

"Then find him!" Tommy's hands curled into fists. "If you lot are just going to stand here then I'll find them" he turned and walked towards the exit. The twins moved to stop him but Phil grabbed his arm. The hold was firm but not too tight. He'd never grab Tommy hard enough to hurt him. "Let me go" Tommy yelled trying to yank his arm away.

Phil pulled him closer. "Toms you need to calm down" he said slowly. Tommy hit Phil's arm with his other fist but the king didn't budge. "No no no- let me go. Fucking let go Tubbo needs help" he cursed. Phil pulled the boy into his arms. Tommy squirmed angrily a moment before he gripped Phil's shirt. The blonde boy sobbed violently. Techno and Wilbur watched. The older twin turned and walked out of the room. He was as mad as Tommy but didn't show it. Wilbur was sad. He had teared up at the thought of Tubbo being alone with Dream. Scared and completely at his mercy.

"Tubbo- he needs.. he needs." Tommy sobbed. Phil just tightened the hug. His son's anger dissipated. He slumped into Phil's chest crying silently. Tommy couldn't believe it. Dream took Tubbo. He'd hurt Tubbo again. That wasn't supposed to happen. Tubbo was supposed to be safe. He closed his eyes as Phil put his hand on the back of Tommy's head. Tubbo needed to be safe. Why was no one helping him? Tommy decided then. If no one else would do it he'd save Tubbo.

Changes

Chapter Notes

I'm sorry Tubbo

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Tubbo wasn't sure exactly how long he sat on the floor before Dream returned again. He was trembling now, not out of fear anymore but rather because he was cold. The stone was freezing to the touch. He curled further in on himself. Footsteps approached and he didn't bother looking up. Dream untied the rope from the iron bars and pulled him to his feet slowly. Tubbo fell forward on his shaking legs but Dream caught him. After helping him back up and stabilizing him Dream turned.

He walked behind Dream with his head down. They went through another series of hallways, deeper into whoever Dream had taken him. All it had taken were those few hits for all of the progress he had made to disappear. He was instantly reversed back to how he was a little over a month ago, terrified and submissive.

They walked through a wooden door and Tubbo looked up curiously. His stomach flipped. It looked eerily similar to the cabin. Near identical minus a few changes. Yet it was deep underground. He looked around as Dream pulled him farther into the room. He tensed when the man slowly undid the rope around his wrists. He looked down at the now bright red marks that encompassed them.

Was this his plan then? To get Tommy and to trap them here forever? Dream pet his head once again before walking over to the door. "I'll be back" he said in a cheery voice. One that was deeply unsettling to Tubbo. He watched as the door shut and multiple locks clicked in place. He looked around the familiar but still new room he was in.

The first difference he noticed was the lack of windows. That was a given really, they were underground. The next thing he noticed was the way the house was set up for two people. Two dining chairs at the table, two spots on the couch. His room also didn't exist in this new version of the cabin. Tommy's did and was identical to his in the cabin but Tubbo had no room. That made him nervous. His old room wasn't much of anything, it wouldn't have been hard to include.

He paused in the bathroom to look at his appearance. His face was heavily bruised. While seeing marks on his face was something he'd grown used to at one point it was odd to him now. It had been so long. He thought he wouldn't have to go through anything like this again.

It was hours later when he discovered the third thing that was different. The kitchen was completely empty. He wasn't sure if it was because Dream just hadn't thought about it yet, or if it was intentional, but he looked through every cabinet and every drawer. There was no food anywhere just a few bottles of water. That was a bit annoying because he was starting to become hungry. He never did get the chance to eat those pretzels.

He was laying on the couch staring at the ceiling thinking about his dad and Tommy when Dream walked in. He wondered they were worried. He also thought about Quackity. The Vice President got hurt defending him- he got stabbed. He couldn't help but worry on whether or not he survived. His dad would be completely heartbroken. He was probably already upset enough with Tubbo gone. *A small part of him Dream had created said Schlatt wouldn't care he was gone. This little voice grew bigger slowly as the hours ticked by.*

"Hello Tubbo" Dream called from the doorway. He walked into the room and looked at the ram boy. His smile turned into a glare. "Get off the couch" Tubbo was on his feet instantly. Dream walked over to him silently. His wide eyes found the floor. Was he in trouble? Why was Dream mad? Tubbo didn't know he wasn't meant to touch the couch. Dream never told him! He touched the couch all the time in the other house.

Dream's hand lifted up and was set on the top of his head, slightly to the side. He flinched and stared at Dream's feet. A moment passed between them. Just as he thought maybe Dream wasn't upset he shoved harshly with his hand. Tubbo tumbled to the floor. The side of his head hit the floor with a loud thud. Stars danced through his vision. He gripped the side of his head crying out. Dream ignored him and grabbed a book before settling on the couch.

Tubbo shook as he pulled his hand from his head. He inspected it but there was no blood. A good sign. His eyes briefly flickered over to Dream. He was too afraid to stare for long. The man noticed anyways. "If you want to sit, do it on the floor. You aren't allowed on the couch. Be grateful I don't make you stand." Tubbo looked down at his hands.

He pulled his knees up to his chest again. Dream continued to ignore him. The two sat like that for the next hour. Dream reading his book on the couch. Tubbo sitting on the floor crying into his knees silently.

Then Dream stood and walked into the kitchen to make food. He had brought ingredients in his bag. Tubbo watched from the doorway. He had never seen the man cook before. It was confusing. He wasn't allowed on the couch but he didn't have to cook? Dream turned and walked over to the table with the food. Tubbo's heart dropped. He only made one serving.

He watched as Dream passed him and sat down at the table. He took a few bites before Tubbo dared to move from where he stood in the kitchen doorway. He had only made it a couple of steps towards the table when Dream held up a hand. Tubbo froze. "Floor" the man said as he motioned to the ground beside the table. Tubbo slowly walked over and sat down on the floor after a moment of hesitation. Dream hummed approvingly and went back to eating.

Tubbo was suddenly hyper aware of how hungry he actually was. How long had it been since he ate something? His arm wrapped around his stomach. He watched Dream eat silently. "Please" he mumbled quietly looking up at him with wide pleading eyes. Dream paused.

Tubbo didn't need to specify what he wanted. The man seemed to debate for a moment before ripping a small part off of his bread. He tossed it carelessly at Tubbo, without even looking, it hit the top of his head before bouncing onto the floor beside him. After a second of hesitation he reached out and grabbed it.

It was small, just a bite really. It also touched the floor. He ate it anyways. The silence continued as Tubbo watched him eat. "Can I-" Dream cut him off. "No" Tubbo sat up a little straighter. "But-" Dream stood and his jaw snapped shut. He instantly scooted back a few steps. Dream didn't even pay attention to him. He walked over to the fire and scrapped the last bits of his food in. Tubbo might have thrown up if he had anything in his stomach to do so. Dream walked over to the kitchen and set his plate in. "Wash it before I come back" and he left.

Chapter End Notes

But also I'm not really sorry

Broken Trust

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

“You can’t be serious”

Phil turned away from Wilbur. He was already sick of the conversation. The king stood in his personal office with his two eldest sons. They were discussing what to do regarding Dream, Tommy, Tubbo, everything really. Tubbo had already been missing for three days by then.

“Wilbur-“ Phil started again. Said boy threw his arms up and cut him off. “Dad you can’t do this!” Phil ran his hand down his face. Technoblade watched the exchange silently. The decision may seem harsh but it was necessary for Tommy’s safety. He had already thought long about it. It wasn’t an easy decision and Wilbur wasn’t making it any better.

“It’s only until we find Dream” he said. Wilbur scoffed, *like that changed anything*. He was glaring at Phil now. “He spent 16 years in that fucking cabin, his whole life, you can’t just lock him in his room. You need to let him out.” Phil turned back to his kids and walked so he was standing in front of Wilbur. He threw his arm out to the side. “And live with the possibility of him running off to try and save Tubbo? We were barely able to stop him last time Wilbur, I’m doing this for his safety.”

Wilbur wanted to punch his father for the first time in his life. Of course Tommy wanted to run off and find Dream as fast as he could. Tubbo was in danger after all. They should stop him, yes, Wilbur doesn’t want him to get hurt, but there are plenty of other ways to do so. Ways that don’t involve some form of your son’s fucking trauma.

The words left his mouth before he could think them over. “Isn’t that what Dream said?” Wilbur asked. A brief moment of regret filled him but he put it to the side. Phil’s feathers ruffled and he stood a little straighter. His patience was wearing thin and he snapped “Don’t compare me to him.” The brunette couldn’t believe Phil was even considering this. Tommy hated being enclosed and he cared about Tubbo. Forcing him to stay in his room instead of letting him come with them to search was cruel. Wilbur pointed his finger in his dad’s chest. “Then stop acting like him”

Phil took a step back. “Get out”

“No-“

”Wilbur I am not changing this decision. Get. Out.”

The two stared at each other angrily before Wilbur turned on his heels and left the room. He slammed the door behind him. Phil sighed again and looked at Technoblade. The pig hybrid was as expressionless as ever. “You think I’m doing the right thing right Techno?” He asked with hope lacing his voice. Technoblade looked him dead in the eyes. “No”

Phil leaned against his desk. “Techno I’m trying to protect him. I mean we can’t take him with us to find Dream he’ll run ahead like last time.” Techno looked to the left. He could only hold eye contact for so long. “Put a leash on him?” He suggested. Phil gave him a look.

The problem was Tommy was faster than the rest of them. He could fly faster than any of them could run and ~~because of Phil being a boomer~~ because of Phil’s old age he couldn’t fly as quickly. They knew if he tried to run off again there was a good chance they couldn’t catch him. The only reason they hadn’t last time was because Phil was already ahead.

Phil understood Tommy’s urgency. They had already searched as quickly as possible for Tubbo. He couldn’t just run off on his own though. Phil wasn’t sure he could handle it if Dream got his hands on Tommy again. The masked man already had Tubbo which made Phil guilty enough. Sure locking his son in his room was probably harsh because the boy had already spent so long trapped but Phil felt optionless. He couldn’t keep him here without restricting where he could go because the castle had so many exits. With the amount of guards searching Phil wouldn’t be able to have them all covered. So he locked Tommy in his room and put two guards in the hallway.

Phil did it that morning. He woke Tommy up, explained it to him, and locked the door. He felt terrible, especially after seeing Tommy’s betrayed expression as he left the room. When Wilbur found out he was pissed off. He yelled at Phil for a solid 5 minutes. Phil couldn’t bring himself to say it wasn’t justified. None of his sons agreed with his decision he realized as he stared at Techno. None of them understood. They’d be mad for a while but it was fine. Whatever it took to keep Tommy safe. He was doing the correct thing.

Right?

Tommy sat on his bed staring at the wall. He hasn’t moved since he sat down after his dad left. He couldn’t believe it. How could Phil do that to him after everything? He just wanted to save Tubbo. Why was he being punished for wanting to save his friend? His brother he thought angrily. Why didn’t his family understand Tubbo was just as much his family as any of them, even more possibly.

Tubbo was the one he grew up with. Tubbo was always there for him and Tommy was always there for Tubbo. That has not changed and never would. Right now Tubbo needed him.

He couldn’t understand why it was taking so long to find him. They *had* to find him. His hands curled around his comforter and his knuckles grew white. He didn’t even want to think about what Tubbo was going through. It had already been three days. Three whole fucking days Tubbo was left alone with *him*. He needed to be saved. Tommy needed to save Tubbo.

He threw his chair out the window. It wasn’t the most discreet escape but there were no other options. The glass shattered and he carefully exited avoiding the sharp edges. Once outside he looked around. What direction would Dream have gone? Tommy wished he had the compass. If he had that Schlatt could just follow it to Tubbo, but it had been smashed after

the first week of their newfound freedom. It was apparently the last one left that was enchanted. If Tommy had known that he would have been more careful with it.

He decided to head East. That's where Dream was heading originally right? He must have been going somewhere. Tommy alternated between traveling by foot and by wings whenever one got tired. He didn't even notice the soreness in his muscles. Or the fact he was almost completely unarmed. The only thing his mind was focused on was Tubbo.

Schlatt was sitting at Quackity's side. His foot tapped anxiously on the ground. The ram hybrid's mind constantly flipping between his son and his injured fiancé. He'd barely gotten any sleep within the past few days. Schlatt went looking for Tubbo a couple of times but remained mostly at Quackity's side. It pained him to do so but he couldn't leave the country without someone running it. He wasn't very much help in the search party either. So he sat by and anxiously waited for news letting the guards do their job.

Quackity had woken up once while Schlatt was away signing something earlier that day. He fell back asleep before the President came back. The doctor said he was barely even awake, only up for a minute at most. Apparently he had mumbled something about Tubbo. Schlatt hadn't left his side since. His hand still encasing Quackity's. It twitched in his hold. His eyes snapped down to his fiancé's face.

Quackity's eyes opened slowly and he groaned a bit. He looked up at Schlatt. "Babe?" Schlatt put his hand on the side of Quackity's face. "Hey there flatty patty" Schlatt smiled slightly as the other rolled his eyes. They were given a brief moment of peace. Schlatt's mind wasn't racing anxiously for the first time in days. Quackity sits up suddenly. "You can't get up yet" Schlatt tried to push him back down but Quackity grabbed his wrists.

"Is Tubbo okay?" Schlatt's expression darkening was answer enough. Quackity's face fell. "J.." his hands slid from the man's wrists to hug him gently. He felt horrible. Tubbo was left with him and he failed. Schlatt lost his son *again*. "I'm sorry." Quackity said. For the first time since the attack Schlatt let the tears that filled his eyes fall.

Chapter End Notes

The plotline of Tommy being locked in his room was inspired by Tangled : The Series

Characters do/say things they shouldn't in this chapter but that's just how it be sometimes

Backpedal

Chapter Summary

Ok listen, I am really sorry for this one :<

The next few chapters are going to be.. a ride. It's a waiting game for karma my friends.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

He thought it had been 3 days by then. Tubbo couldn't exactly tell with no windows, but he had fallen asleep three times. He wasn't sure at first if it was his body maintaining an internal clock or him just sleeping out of boredom but Dream had also entered to read and made himself food three times. He never made a breakfast food, so Tubbo assumed he only came here for dinner. So he figured 3 days was a safe bet.

Speaking of the food Tubbo hasn't ate a single thing since that little bit of bread Dream gave him. Besides the overbearing pain in his stomach he was starting to feel sluggish and lightheaded. His back also hurt because he had been sleeping hunched over in the corner. Knees to his chest curled in on himself. Dream made it painfully clear he wasn't allowed to touch any of the furniture. While the man never came around the time he was sleeping, Tubbo never risked it. He was too terrified of the consequences.

Every time Dream came and made food Tubbo would sit quietly and wait. He even stopped himself from asking yesterday, because Dream got annoyed when he asked. The man had thus far ignored his pleas every time. He'd scrape what little leftovers remained on his plate into the fireplace and put the dish in the skin before leaving. Tubbo was so desperate he had licked Dream's last plate clean. He rinsed it after, of course, but the tiny bit of remaining food left on the plate was the only thing he had access to. It didn't do anything, it could be considered a treat for his tastebuds at most. A taunt of the food he desperately needed but couldn't have.

When the door opened Dream grabbed a book and headed to the couch like usual. Tubbo watched from his place on the ground. His eyes found the floor and he listened to the sound of pages turning. The man read through a few pages before he spoke. "Come here" His entire body tensed as he stood. Tubbo slowly made his way over to in front of the couch, his hands gripped his upper arms hugging himself. Dream looked up at him from his book and motioned him to sit down with his hand. When he did Dream reached for him and he flinched. He hadn't done anything wrong to his knowledge so the hand had no reason to hit him. *But it was Dream's hand.*

The man set his hand on Tubbo's head and ran his fingers through the boy's soft hair. Tubbo sat completely stiff next to him. The touch was gentle but Tubbo couldn't relax even if he had wanted to. Just sitting next to Dream sent his heart racing. Dream, who had been unpredictable as ever, was not someone Tubbo wanted to be near. He didn't want to be next to him. He didn't want Dream to run his fingers through his hair as he trembled. He didn't say anything though. Dream read through a bit more of his book while he pet Tubbo's head before standing up to make dinner again.

"Tubbo" Dream called from the kitchen. Tubbo had remained in the living room not wanting to stare at some more food he couldn't eat. His nerves spiked a moment. He wondered briefly if he forgot to wash Dream's plate even though he knew, logically, he had washed it yesterday. He remembered washing it. He stood and walked into the kitchen fearful of what waited for him. Dream wasn't angry though, he stared down at Tubbo kindly. It didn't ease his nerves.

The man turned to Tubbo with bread in his hand. He ripped off a piece and held it out to the hungry ram boy. Tubbo hesitantly reached for it. Once safely in his grasp he quickly ate it. He was surprised when Dream ripped off another piece and handed it over. He ended up giving Tubbo the whole loaf bit by bit. Near the end Tubbo started to chew the bites slower, prolonging him from finishing the meal now that he was no longer desperate for any form of food. Dream was kind enough to be patient with him.

Tubbo mentally backtracked. Dream wasn't *kind*. He was the reason Tubbo was starving in the first place. He was the reason Tubbo was injured and in pain. Giving him the bare minimum amount of food necessary for survival wasn't kind.

So why did Tubbo feel so grateful?

Dream ate his food after the loaf was gone. The ram boy stood to the side watching him like usual. Tubbo expected him to leave again but instead he turned to Tubbo. "Do you want to come with me?" Tubbo's ram ears twitched. He wasn't sure where Dream was going, but anywhere other than sitting in here alone was good. He wasn't exactly excited to be near Dream but the man had been kind recently right? *He didn't want to be alone.*

He followed Dream out of the front door and down the gray dim hallways. The chill returned to his bones. The fake cabin was much warmer than the rest of the structure. He shivered slightly as he wore a short sleeve. No wonder Dream always had a hoodie.

They entered a room with brewing stands and lava. In the center was a ring of little boxes. Almost all of them were filled with little green orbs glowing a golden color. Tubbo stared at them. They were rather pretty and Tubbo had never seen anything like them before. Dream held an enderpearl in his hand and waved it around motioning to the empty boxes. "I just need two more"

Tubbo frowned. The gold orbs didn't look like ender pearls. Dream noticed the confusion and chuckled lightly. "They used to be enderperals. With a special ingredient they change into those golden orbs." Dream walked over to the brewing stand. He opened the chest and pulled something out. Tubbo's stomach flipped. In his hand was a familiar golden feather. Dream

placed it into the brewing stand. It already held a bunch of feathers Tubbo hadn't noticed before with some blaze powder mixed in. Tubbo watched as the water turned into a golden glowing liquid.

Dream grabbed the new potion and turned to Tubbo. He held the enderpearl out and poured the potion over it. The enderpearl turned gold like the ones in the boxes and Dream dropped it down into the empty slot. So this is why Dream took Tommy's feathers. Tubbo took a fearful step back and he heard a crack. He jumped slightly and looked down. A sinking feeling filled him. A broken enderpearl rested at his feet. Dream's smile vanished.

"Are you fucking kidding me" he swore. Tubbo stumbled backwards even further as fearful tremors racked his body. Dream walked towards him. "I'm sorry" he shrieked when Dream was within arms reach. The man grabbed him by the horn and yanked him to the floor away from the wall harshly. Tubbo hit the ground and cried out. "You mess *everything* up" Dream growled. He grabbed Tubbo by the horn again and dragged him out of the room. Tubbo struggled the whole way back to the fake cabin. He clawed at Dream's wrist desperately.

Dream threw the door open and pulled Tubbo inside. He was sobbing out apologies now. He didn't mean to break the enderpearl it was an accident. Dream let him go. He struggled to his hands and knees only for Dream to kick him in the side. "Worthless little-" Dream cut himself off angrily. He kicked Tubbo in the side a few more times. The boy was unable to fight back. He pushed his foot down on Tubbo's neck. Tubbo grabbed his ankle but the grip wasn't tight.

"Maybe I should just kill you. Ender knows you deserve it" he pushed his foot down harder. Tubbo cried. He couldn't breathe- he couldn't breathe. Dream was going to kill him. He tried desperately hitting Dream's ankle to no avail. Dream was stronger than him already but in his tired and hungry state he was completely defenseless. He'd never see his dad again. He'd never see Tommy. The boy sobbed as much as he could with his air cut off. Just as he thought he'd finally die Dream lifted his foot.

Tubbo's hand instantly reached up to his neck massaging it. He sat up gasping for breathes. Each one was painful. Dream watched him with glaring eyes. He tilted the boy's head up to look at him while he spoke. "Tubbo I am done with you. You aren't going to get any more chances. Pull another stunt like that and I will kill you. Do you understand?" Tubbo trembled in his hold. The cliff incident was enough for him to know Dream wasn't messing around. "Y- yes sir" he managed out between his heavy breathing. The man seemed satisfied as he left. Tubbo's crying only grew louder as he walked down the hall.

Dream walked into the forest outside of the stronghold. That stupid pest just had to destroy his last enderpearl. He supposed it didn't matter that much, he needed more feathers anyways. Still getting another pearl would be annoying. When he fed it earlier he had almost forgot why he let Tubbo stay around. Sure, Tommy was attached but Dream didn't care about Tommy's wants much anymore. The blonde wasn't stuck under his thumb thanks to that pig,

there was no point in catering to him anymore. Once he got the feathers he could lock Tommy in the cabin and ignore the two.

Still.. he forgot how much *fun* it was. How amazing it felt to watch Tubbo tremble beneath him. The thing was always easy to beat into submission. Dream did love having something to control. So maybe when he completed his task he'd continue playing house.

As he walked through the forest he noticed something shiny in the sky. He looked up and focused his eyes on a flying figure. A smirk appeared on his face. It was only a matter of time really. He pulled an arrow out and loaded the bow. The figure hadn't noticed him yet. He looked back up and took aim.

Chapter End Notes

This book was meant to end at the next chapter, but since there's no time skip between this one and the next one I think I'll just continue this one. So only 4 books instead of 5 but this one will be longer. Plus whatever oneshots I do.

Falling Asleep

When the door opened Tubbo didn't even look up. He sat in the corner of the living room. Hearing the locks click made his frame tremble fearfully. He didn't want to look up. He didn't want to see Dream. It hurt to breath. ~~Everything hurt.~~ Dream approached him slowly, like approaching a scared animal. He curled in on himself further and squeezed his eyes shut. Dream stared down at him smirking slightly behind his new smiley mask.

Tubbo didn't know Tommy was only a few hallways away. Dream had taken him here and wrapped his now injured wing in a bandage. He was currently passed out but Dream knew it was only a matter of time before he woke up. He crouched down on the floor in front of Tubbo. Ignoring the boy's flinch he grabbed Tubbo and pulled him towards himself. He wrapped his arms around the ram boy. Tubbo sat shaking in his arms.

Dream held him tightly. Not with the intention of hurting the boy further, but instead to provide false comfort. Tubbo seemingly fell for it. He slumped onto Dream's chest. The man rubbed circles into his back. Tubbo couldn't help but be reminded of Quackity. Dream paid no attention the the way his stomach growled or the way Tubbo shied away from his hands. He pulled away and cupped Tubbo's face in his hands. "Hey there little ram"

Tubbo looked up at him through his teary eyes. He wanted as far away from Dream as possible but he couldn't get himself to move. Why couldn't he move? "I'm sorry I had to punish you Tubbo. You know I really hate doing it right?"

Dream was a liar

Dream cares

"If you just behaved I wouldn't be forced to correct your behavior"

Dad said Dream hitting you was wrong

You deserved it

"You're doing so well though, I'm sure you'll be perfectly in your place soon enough yeah?"

Tubbo nodded. That was the answer Dream wanted. It didn't matter what he thought. He winced as the movement caused a pain in his neck. It would have been more painful to talk so Tubbo didn't have much of a choice. He had to answer. Ignoring Dream would be disrespectful. Tubbo didn't want to be disrespectful. *Tubbo didn't want to be punished.*

Dream pulled him back into the hug. "Then we can be a family again. Tommy, you, and I. When you're completely obedient I won't need to punish you and we can be happy. Just the three of us. You don't need Schlatt, he doesn't even care about you. If he did he would have found you by now wouldn't he?" Tubbo shifted. That wasn't true was it? His dad would look for him wouldn't he? He just hasn't found Tubbo yet. That has to be it. It's been days, sure,

but he had to be looking. “Schlatt isn’t a good man Tubbo. I saved you from him. They probably filled your head with lies about me kidnapping you. You’re so naive.”

Tubbo pulled away from Dream and looked up at him confused. His dad was good. But Dream said he wasn’t.. and Dream’s word was law. No it wasn’t. Dream stole and hurt him- he- Tubbo wanted to pull his hair out in frustration. He didn’t know what to believe anymore. Tubbo’s head was a hurricane of confusion.

“Tubbo it was only a matter of time before Schlatt hurt you” He pushed farther away and put his hands over his ears. He didn’t want to listen. Dream pried his hands off anyways. His tone grew venomous and Tubbo’s heart rate spiked. “Listen *ram* this is is important. Schlatt is an angry drunk. He would have hurt you even when you did good.”

Tubbo shook his head aggressively and closed his eyes while ignoring the pain. No no no. It wasn’t true- Dream was lying. Quackity helped Schlatt out of his drinking problems. Even then Dream hurt him when he was obedient right? He was obedient and stayed off the furniture. He broke the enderpearl though. It was an accident! That wasn’t disobedience. Was it? He didn’t deserve it. He did deserve it.

His hands curled into fists. Everything Dream said was a lie. He yanked his arms back and tried to push farther into the corner. Dream was lying but *Dream would never lie*. Schlatt was an angry drunk who didn’t care about him. Schlatt hadn’t saved him yet. Schlatt was still looking. Schlatt would have hurt him. Schlatt promised he never would. His thoughts were too much. Tubbo sobbed, the sound was pained as it tore through his injured throat.

Dream’s patience was dwindling. He could only put up with it’s blubbering for so long. Schlatt would pay for ruining his years of hard work. Ruining his pet. The Tubbo he had months ago would have never questioned what he said. He reached out again but Tubbo pushed his arm away. “No- no” he sobbed. Dream’s anger flared. He raised his hand back to strike the ram. It silenced immediately and froze in the corner looking up with wide eyes. Dream didn’t even need to follow through. He let his hand fall to his side.

“m’ sorry” The boy rasped out as he dropped his gaze. He made himself smaller. He didn’t want to be hit. He wanted to be good. He’d be good. Dream hummed. “I know the truth is hard to accept. I tell you this because I care about you. I’m the only one who does, so you should be grateful”

Tommy cared about him. Schlatt did, so did Tommy’s family. They said so. That memory was distant now. Tubbo could barely focus on it. His head was so hazy. When had they said again? Maybe.. maybe he was remembering wrong. Dream wouldn’t lie to him. He grabbed his head. Dream pulled him into his arms again and Tubbo didn’t fight it. Dream held him. He was so kind.

Everything hurt. His stomach, his head, his back. It was all confusing and horrible and Tubbo just wanted it to stop. Tubbo buried his head in Dream’s shoulder and shut his eyes. Dream pet his head comfortingly. He wanted it to stop.

Dream pet the ram's hair until it fell asleep. He stood up and carried it in his arms. Dream would let Tommy near it again soon, but for now he had to keep them separate. He carried the ram out of the fake cabin and past the room Tommy was in. He arrived at the room he made earlier.

He set the ram down in the small room. Maybe he should have made the room bigger, there wasn't even room for it to lay down all the way. Not that it really mattered. He stood and closed the iron door locking it with his key. With the ram taken care of he made his way to Tommy.

Waking Up

Tommy woke up in an unfamiliar room. The first thing he noticed was the pain in his wing. He shifted in the bed. Where was he? The last thing he remembered- Dream. He sat up suddenly. Dream shot him. He looked around quickly. He had to get out- he had to find Tubbo- he had to-

"Tommy?" A voice called. He looked in the doorway. Dream stood there, smiley face mask in hand. It fell from his hands and he closed the distance between himself and Tommy instantly. Tommy tensed as Dream came closer. The man pulled him into a tight hug. "You're okay" he breathed out.

Tommy froze. Dream continued "I'm so glad you're okay Toms. I was so worried." Tommy pulled away from Dream's arms and glared. How dare Dream pretend again. Did he really think Tommy would fall for his manipulation again? "You were worried? You shot me you stupid-" Dream's face turned sad. "Oh Tommy.." he looked down at Tommy sadly. His face held pity and Tommy sneered.

"What are you talking about? I didn't shoot you Tommy." Tommy scoffed. Of course Dream shot him. Well.. he thought so at least. He was flying looking for Tubbo, got shot, and was suddenly being carried by Dream. Sure he didn't remember Dream shooting him but that's what happened right? He looked away and scowled at the wall. "You hit your head Tommy"

Tommy looked up at him. "I did?" He asked slowly. Dream reached a hand up and touched a spot on his head lightly. Tommy recoiled, it did hurt but.. did he hit his head? "Poor thing" Dream cooed. Tommy scooted farther into the bed away from Dream. "Technoblade shot you"

No. Tommy refused to believe that. "Fat fucking chance" he scoffed. He looked at Dream. The very real looking sadness and pity on his face twisted Tommy's gut. Technoblade wouldn't. Dream just grabbed his hand and pulled him out of the bed. "Come on Tommy, let's get you somewhere cozy"

Dream led him down a creepy stone brick hallway. They walked into another room and Tommy looked around bewildered. It was like the cabin. He sat down at the table Dream pulled him over to. There were only two chairs. The other cabin had 4, enough for all three of them to sit comfortably. All three of them.

"Where's Tubbo?"

Dream carried two plates of food and set them on the table. "Somewhere safe" Dream began eating. He glared at Dream. Anywhere Dream had access too wasn't safe for Tubbo. The man paused and looked at him. "You know you really should eat your food. Not everyone is lucky enough to have access to food."

Tommy felt like throwing up. He noticed the underlying meaning of Dream's words. Dream just smiled at him kindly. This sick fuck- Techno would kill him. Tommy wished he could.

He stiffened. The boy remembered he had gone against his dad's wishes. He got caught by Dream again, this is exactly what Phil was trying to prevent.

He felt bad. Phil was probably so upset. "I'm not going to fall for your manipulation again you stupid green bastard" Dream's smile vanished. He tilted his head. "I didn't think so" he stood and walked around the table. The man stopped behind Tommy and grabbed the backrest of his chair. Tommy's heart sunk as Dream leaned down towards him so he was speaking into his ear lowly.

"You'll do what I say anyways right Tommy? I'd hate for poor little Tubbo to have to suffer the consequences."

Tommy punched him in the face. Dream's head snapped backwards and his hand found his nose quickly. The pure anger that washed over the man's face would have scared Tommy if his anger wasn't the same. Dream stalked over to him, grabbed the front of his shirt, and lifted Tommy up slightly so he was on his tip toes.

"Listen Tommy, you'll do what I ask whether you like it or not. Every day you refuse Tubbo won't be fed." Dream dropped him and turned to the door. Tommy froze. Wouldn't be fed? He expected Dream to threaten to beat him or something but to *starve* him? "I'll be back to try again tomorrow." He opened the door. Tommy was freaking out. Tubbo needed to eat. He didn't want Tubbo to go hungry and have it be his fault. "Wait Dream" he made his way over but Dream just glared at him.

"I gave you a chance. You can try again tomorrow" Tommy flinched as the door slammed shut. The locks clicked and Tommy fell back into his chair. Guilt swirled in his mind. He didn't know what Dream wanted but Tommy didn't want Tubbo to suffer. He hoped his family came for them fast.

Questions

Chapter Summary

I intended on this book to be really fluffy

Somewhere along the way I really fucked that up huh?

Also Tommy was meant to be the main character but I think we all know deep down it's really Tubbo.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Tommy sat on the bed in his room. Well it wasn't his room, his room was in Phil's castle. He was in a prison cell really. It just lacked the iron bars. He made his way to the kitchen and looked in the cabinet. There was a bit of food, not a lot. He decided to make himself a couple of eggs.

Tommy wasn't very good at cooking but over the month they were freed Tubbo taught Tommy a few things. Dream walked in a minute after he finished eating it. Well most of it anyways. He didn't have much of an appetite. He walked in and sat down casually, ignoring the tension in the room. "Hi Tommy"

Tommy didn't bother trying to conceal his disdain for the man. Dream looked down at his sad half eaten meal and smiled. "Don't worry Tommy, you won't have to cook for yourself much longer" Tommy's scowl deepened and he set his hand on his plate. He couldn't understand why Dream was so terrible to Tubbo. What did he ever do to deserve such treatment?

"Why?" He asked slowly, his voice cracking. Dream raised an eyebrow. "Well you have to be a bit more specific Tommy" The boy stood and threw his plate at the wall. It shattered on impact. Anger filled him and it took all of his willpower to not pounce on that *stupid green son of a bitch*. Dream didn't react. He stared at Tommy with his eyes half lidded as if he were a tired parent watching a child throw a tantrum. That only pissed him off more. "You know what I'm taking about you bastard" he growled. Questions he desperately wanted answers to filled his head.

Dream sighed. When he didn't make an attempt to speak Tommy continued. "Why? Why did you take us? What did you gain from stealing two innocent children from people who were your *allies*? What reason did you have manipulate us? And why was Tubbo treated so much worse than I was? What did Tubbo do to deserve it? Why are we here? Why did you pretend to be my brother? Why?"

They stared at each other silently. Dream stood and walked to the door. Tommy whirled around to yell at him but Dream opened the door and motioned for him to come. He had expected Dream to just leave. Uneasiness settled in his stomach. He followed Dream out of the cabin and down the similar gray hallways. They took several turns Tommy couldn't keep track of them all. He had no idea how the man didn't get lost. He knew if Tubbo and him tried to escape it'd be near impossible.

They entered a room with glowing orbs in boxes. Tommy looked at them curiously. Dream threw an arm over his shoulder and gestured to them. "This is why" he said. Like that explained anything. He had no idea what they were nor what they had to do with him. Dream's hand reached down to his wing and yanked a feather out. Tommy yelped and pulled away from Dream.

"You're feathers are what turn the enderpearls gold" He waved the feather around. Tommy blinked. His feathers turned enderpearls gold? Is that why Dream took his feathers? To use them for this weird project. That was... oddly upsetting. A small part of him had wanted a better answer. Perhaps it was selfish. He wanted Dream to care about him though he wasn't entirely sure why. Why did he care what Dream thought? Of course the man only wanted him for his wings. Tommy was silly to hope for anything more.

That didn't even explain everything. "What about Tubbo?" Dream looked away. A cruel smile parted his lips. "Why not?"

Tommy wanted to punch him again. His fists curled tighter and he felt his fingernails dig into his palms. Why not? *Why not?* Tommy could give him a detailed 50 page list on *why not*. Dream grabbed his arm and pulled him back out of the room before he could respond. "Let's get you back home."

Tommy yanked his arm away. "Where is Tubbo?" The man rolled his eyes and grabbed him again. His hold tighter this time as he pulled him along. 'I'd never hurt you Tommy'. He glared at Dream. They walked in silence back to then fake cabin.

"Tomorrow" Dream started. He walked in front of Tommy and grabbed his chin tilting it up. "Tomorrow, you will help me bring my project closer to completion. Do you understand?" Tommy wanted to say no. He desperately wanted to say no. He had no idea what the project really was, probably nothing good because Dream was doing it. The threat he made yesterday filled his mind again. "Okay" he agreed halfheartedly.

Dream's hand dropped from his face and he grinned. "That's great!" He chirped as he walked to the door. He turned to Tommy before it closed. "Think of it as a bonding experience between brothers" The slam of the door echoed throughout the room.

Dream walked away from the door after locking it and double checking the locks. Tommy agreed faster than he had thought. He'd have to feed it now he figured. Speaking of his little ram, while he was already able to reverse most of the damage Schlatt and the others had done, he knew he still had a lot of work to do. He didn't want to wait another few years. Dream was impatient.

If that meant being a little rougher than usual, so be it.

Chapter End Notes

I hope the ending scares you

It should

Purple

He was curled up uncomfortably in a small dark room. He wasn't sure how he got there exactly, or how long it had been. He tried to cry out for someone, anyone really even Dream, to no avail. His throat still hurt and the little yelling he did manage only worsened it. The lack of water he'd had recently didn't help either.

He was still incredibly hungry and terrified, very terrified. Tubbo hated small spaces. Especially when they were dark. He had scratched and kicked at the walls when he first woke up. Much like the yelling he lost the strength to continue. So he laid for hours in silence consumed by his thoughts. Some were good. Reassurance and hopeful, thinking of Tommy or his saving him. Most of them weren't so positive.

For the first time in what felt like forever Tubbo heard a sound other than his uneven breathing. A click noise. The lock. He looked up as the door swung open. Dream stood in the doorway looking down at him. Tubbo's whole body tensed. Terror settled into his bones. Sure he wanted out, he wanted to be around someone because being alone was just horrible, he wanted to see something other than darkness, but it was *Dream*.

He pushed farther into the corner when Dream reached out for him. The hand paid no mind to his cowering as it gripped his horn harshly and yanked him out into the hallway. Tubbo yelped and tumbled to the floor. He didn't understand. What had he done? Did Dream hear him yelling, is that what he was upset by?

A foot crashed down on his ankle and he yelped again. He looked up at Dream now. The man wasn't glaring, he didn't even look angry, his just stared down at Tubbo impassively. He pushed himself up so he was sitting as he looked at Dream. He tried to suppress the tremors of fear. It didn't work.

Dream's hand grabbed his chin roughly. Tears sprang in Tubbo's eyes. What did he do? "Here is how this is going to go pet" he hissed in a low menacing tone. Tubbo's heart dropped. Dream's fingernails dug into his skin "You're going to follow me around and do what I ask. You aren't going to say a fucking word. No complaining, no questions, just obedience. Do you understand?"

Tubbo had no idea why Dream was being so aggressive. He must have done something to anger him. The boy nodded in Dream's hold. The man took a step back and watched as Tubbo slowly stood up. He hated having eyes on him. Dream's gaze alone was enough to terrify him. Why was he scared? If he did what Dream asked he'd be fine right? ~~That never worked in the past.~~

They walked down the hall. Tubbo's head was down and Dream's hand was rested on the back of his neck. The grip keeping him by Dream's side. He walked with a slight limp now because of his ankle. Dream lead him into a kitchen. It was different from the one in the cabin, bigger and full of food. Dream shoved him lightly into the kitchen.

Dream turned and left the room. Tubbo watched him silently. What was he supposed to do? Dream didn't command him to do anything, but he must have brought him here for a reason. Tubbo looked around desperately for any sign of what to do. Panic swelled in his chest. What was he supposed to do? What did Dream want? He didn't want to upset Dream but he *didn't know what to do*.

He whimpered. Logically, Dream brought him here to make food. It was the kitchen after all. So he should make food. That was *one of the only things he is good for*. But what if Dream got mad at him for touching it without his permission?

Dream reappeared in the hallway after a few more minutes and Tubbo tried to make himself look as small as possible while standing. His face was angry. Oh, Tubbo chose wrong. Of course he did, he was always wrong. "Why are you still standing here?" Dream grabbed Tubbo's wrist and pulled him farther into the kitchen. *He should have just started cooking*.

"I- I'm sorry I didn't" Tubbo began to apologize. Dream whirled around and shoved Tubbo into the wall closing his hands around the boy's neck. He never would kill it, not actually, but it didn't need to know that. "What did I say? I told you to not speak why is that so hard for you to understand?" He yelled. Tubbo wrapped his fingers around Dream's wrists desperately. His eyes wide and fearful. "Do you want me to kill you?" He pressed down harder. Tubbo shook his head as tears slipped from his eyes.

Tubbo didn't want to die. Of course he didn't. There were a lot of things he *wanted*. He wanted his dad, he wanted Quackity, and Phil and Tommy. Ender he really wanted Tommy. He wanted to feel safe and warm and *loved*. He couldn't have those things. Not for a long time, maybe he never would again. In this moment he'd give up all of those things because most of all *he didn't want to die*.

Dream released him again and he dropped to his knees clutching his neck protectively. He was left gasping for air again. Dream was always scary. Dream being mad and yelling was scary, Tubbo messing up and waiting for the consequences was scary, but nothing was scarier than what Dream had just done. He was trembling and crying now. Dream had never done that before in the cabin. It was different, it was worse.

Dream took a few steps back. "Make food already" he growled. Tubbo stood on shaky legs and found the nearest ingredients to start preparing. It was hard because his hands were trembling but he managed. Dream stood by and watched the whole time. Mentally criticizing everything he did. Tubbo hated being watched.

He stared down at the food as he cooked. He was still very hungry. He'd been here days, but the only thing he got to eat so far was a little bread. Tubbo had never gone so long without food before. Another new thing for him.

Part of him wished they never left the cabin. Dream was always very cruel, he was rarely nice to Tubbo. At least in the cabin it was tolerable. Harsh words, an occasional slap or kick, those were things he could deal with. Things he didn't need to worry about whether or not he'd live through. This Dream was different though. He didn't hesitate to dance around the dangerous cliff that death was. Tubbo's life hanging in the balance. The ram boy was not prepared for it.

He'd gotten too comfortable in Manberg. Of course he had. *Tubbo should have known better.* He tilted his head down further. *It was so stupid to think he'd be happy and safe.* He was chopping carrots and the knife hit down harder than before. *He should have been grateful for Dream's treatment of him in the cabin.* The knife was getting to the end of the carrot. *He was a little worse for wear, sure, but he was alive.* "Ram"

He stopped cutting. The knife sat just barely above his fingers. His heart dropped as he snapped back into the present. He instantly moved his fingers away from under the knife. He turned to Dream and kept his eyes to the floor. "Make sure there's two servings"

Tubbo jolts slightly. Would he finally get food? He glanced up at Dream before quickly looking back at the food. He tried not to get his hopes up. There was always the possibility he wouldn't get food.

Dream watched him as he cooks. His eyes linger on the dark purple bruises that wrap around the ram hybrid's neck. The fresh ones covering the barely faded old ones that were alone this morning. They were like a collar almost, he muses. Physical evidence that it belonged to him. He smiled at the thought.

Two Servings

Dream stared down at the two plates in front of him. Tubbo stood by his side nervously. He was sure Dream would point out one of his shortcomings any moment now. “Are you hungry?” Dream asked casually turning to the boy. They both knew the answer. Tubbo looked up at him. His mouth opened, he hesitated and snapped it shut. He opted to answer with a small nod. Dream hummed approvingly. He cupped the ram boy’s face in his hand.

“You can eat the second plate” he started. Tubbo’s ears twitched slightly. It felt like a weight was lifted from his shoulder. It took all of his willpower not to tear away from Dream to eat the food. He looked down at the plate and Dream pulled his face back so they were looking at each other. “But” Tubbo’s heart dropped. “It was meant to be Tommy’s. If you want to be selfish, go right ahead. I’m sure Tommy will be fine missing a meal”

The silence was suffocating. His world came crashing back down. Tubbo didn’t think too much on the decision. He stepped back. He wouldn’t take the plate, of course he wouldn’t. Tommy had always been more important than him anyways. He wouldn’t be *selfish*. “Alright then” Dream put his hand back on Tubbo’s neck and guided him out of the room.

They walked down the hall again. “Maybe, if you’re good, tomorrow you’ll earn food that is completely yours huh?” Dream smiled down at him. He looked at the floor. They walked back to the familiar small door. Tubbo wanted to cry. It felt like every time things started to look up, every time it started to feel better, it was ripped away from him quickly. His freedom, his safety, the *privilege to eat*. Whatever god that was pulling the strings was a cruel one, if there was a god at all.
(oops 0-0 ~Val)

Dream locked the door and went back to the kitchen. He was pleased it entered on its own. He didn’t even need force. There was a sadistic bounce in his step, he always felt giddy after spending time around his little ram. He picked up the plates and headed to the fake cabin.

Tommy stared at him as he entered with the food. “I didn’t know you could cook” he mocked. Dream rolled his eyes and set the plates down. He was starting to get tired of the boy’s mouth. He knew he couldn’t silence him like he did Tubbo. The ram child already had the foundation built after years of his treatment. Tommy didn’t.

“Of course I know how to cook Tommy. I didn’t spend my childhood sitting around a cabin lazily like you did.” Tommy’s wings straightened out. His gaze sharpened as he glared daggers at Dream. He said it as if Tommy being in the cabin was a choice. As if he could leave it whenever he wanted without Dream’s supervision.

Dream sat down at the table and began eating. “I mean you could have helped Tubbo with the house work once in a while” Tommy stood a little ways away from the table watching. Dream told him not to help. He could have, but he didn’t want to cause problems. That was the right choice right? Tubbo never seemed to mind. He never complained.

They talked about it once before. It was late at night. They were curled up together on Tommy's bed in the Antarctic Empire. Usually Tubbo would sleep in his own bed but he had a nightmare. The first place he went was Tommy. The blonde of course opened his arms up and Tubbo clung to him. It always broke his heart when Tubbo was sad. Nightmares he wished never happened. *Memories he could have prevented.* No Tommy wasn't to blame. Tubbo never blamed him.

"I was never around enough to notice." Their eyes met. He looked at the food again. Two servings. Tubbo made two servings every day, three times. That was a lot of food to make daily. On top of the other housework too. He shifted his weight. Tommy could have helped, with a lighter work load Tubbo could have been happier. He could have slept more. *He only would have endured more nightmares.* Dream would have found less problems with the condition of the house. *Dream would have found another reason to be upset anyways.*

"you're wrong"

"Am I?"

No. Yes. Dream stood up. "You we're rather selfish really. We have a lot of work to do Tommy so eat your food." *Selfish.* A word he'd thought of frequently before. Tommy wasn't selfish. He did his best in the situation he was put in, he did what he thought was right. That's what dad said. He was a victim too. That wasn't selfish.

Was it?

Together Again

Chapter Summary

I feed off of the distress that fills my comment section with every chapter

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Another week went by and the two were left completely alone with Dream. They hadn't even seen each other yet. Every other day Dream would take Tommy to the room with the golden pearls. Dream had this old book with an incantation he was trying to decipher. Tommy would sometimes hear him mutter to himself about it how he used to know it, couldn't remember, and hundreds of years. He didn't know what the man was talking about and he didn't care enough to ask.

His leg bounced nervously. Dream gave up trying to stop his fidgeting a while ago. He always brought him but never gave him work to do. He said he didn't need Tommy until he deciphered the book. So usually he thought about Tubbo and his family. He worried greatly for his friend ~~brother~~. He knew Tubbo was here somewhere but Dream wouldn't let them see each other. Not yet.

Dream slammed the book down on the table and stood up. Tommy jumped at the sudden outburst. "If I let you see the ram will you stop being so fucking distracting?" Dream turned to him. He looked over surprised. He couldn't believe Dream offered that. Tommy nodded and Dream scoffed.

Tommy wasn't sure why he was allowing this. If he really thought Tommy was distracting he could just leave him in the cabin. He didn't bother thinking about it too much. Tommy learned a long time ago trying to figure out Dream's motives was a waste of time. Dream walked over and stood in front of him. "You can see him but I don't want you touching him understand? No physical contact at all"

He was planning on hugging Tubbo when he first saw the boy. If no contact was what it took, then whatever. He just wanted to see Tubbo. He wanted to know he was okay. He wanted to see someone that wasn't Dream. "Fine" he grumbled. He'd follow Dream's rules for now.

Dream walked down the hallway to the door. He opened the door slowly to see the ram curled up in a ball. It peaked its head out and looked up at Dream with wide eyes. The ram tried to mask its fear but Dream saw it anyways. Dream smiled. He looked at the newest

punishment he implemented to fix the boy. A muzzle wrapped around the it's face, the cage like part was shorter than one that you'd see on a dog. It was human sized, a perfect fit.

He put it on a few days ago after feeding it for the first time in a while. The fastening on it was too complicated for the ram boy to take it off of alone. Perhaps it was an unfair punishment, forcing the muzzle on right after strangling it. He could have stuck to one or the other. Plus, the ram was just trying to thank him for the food, but still, Dream told it not to speak. It wasn't his fault the ram couldn't listen.

It's not like Dream was totally cruel to the boy either. He gave it a little food the other day so he wouldn't die (a half loaf of bread). Secondly, yesterday he held the shaking ram in his lap after a particularly harsh beating. Words of comfort were whispered into it's hair to calm it down. A hand rubbing up and down it's back.

While the ram didn't do anything wrong, it'd been completely obedient, Dream still needed to punish it to get his message across. The ram's shoulders had lost their uneasy tension, it had relaxed, punishment was just necessary. So it remembered it's place. Afterward he could have locked the ram in the closet to let it cry alone. He comforted it instead. They stared at each other. "Stand up" he commanded stepping away from the entrance.

The ram was on his feet outside the room instantly. "You get to see Tommy today" his eyes snapped from the floor up to Dream. He couldn't believe it. He'd get to see Tommy? He hadn't seen him in so long. Tubbo missed Tommy dearly. Back in the cabin Tommy always made the suffering lessen. Maybe he'd help Tubbo feel better again. *Tubbo knew deep down this time was different, not even Tommy could make him forget for a few peaceful moments.*

The metal on his mouth was uncomfortable. It dug into his skin and left it irritated. He tried to get it off at first but Dream smacked his hand down every time he reached for it. When he was alone he tried again but he couldn't figure out how. He grew frustrated and cried. The cries going from angry to sad and heartbreaking. He thought he might have even screamed if it weren't for the metal on his face. Instead he just whimpered pitifully. (Though perhaps that was a blessing in disguise, he wasn't sure his throat could handle screaming) Everything had crashed down on him at once. He broke. When Dream came to get him again he stopped resisting completely. He kept his head down and his mouth shut. It's not like he could open much it anyways.

Maybe he was getting to see Tommy because he was good. His ears twitched happily. If he continued to be good maybe he could go back to the cabin. He followed Dream with his eyes down submissively. Tubbo could be good.

They went to the room with the glowing pearls again. Tubbo recognized it because he had been there a few times with Dream. The man's hand reached up and was set on the back of his neck. Tubbo flinched and then tensed. Dream said yesterday he didn't like it when Tubbo flinched. It reminded Dream of punishing him and *Dream hated punishing him*. It was selfish for Tubbo to flinch. It made Dream feel bad. It wasn't Dream's fault Tubbo needed punished.

Tommy was sitting in the same place when they returned. He heard the footsteps and looked up. Bile rose in his throat when he saw Tubbo. He looked just terrible, way worse than Tommy did. His hair was a mess, he had a painful looking black eye and bruises on his neck. *Layers* of bruises, as if once they started to heal someone replaced them. Tommy was on his feet and crossed the distance between them. He looked at the thing on Tubbo's face. From his seat he wasn't exactly sure what it was but as he got closer he realized. He reached his hand up to touch it but instantly pulled it back.

Tubbo looked up at him with a sadness in his eyes. Tommy looked up at Dream. "What did you do to him" he growled. The man shrugged. He desperately wanted to pull Tubbo into his arms and never let go. He figured doing so would only make it worse for Tubbo. He looked down at the rest of the ram boy's appearance. He was skinny- too skinny. "You said if I did what you asked he'd get fed" he looked at Dream again.

Dream just grinned and placed his hand on top of Tubbo's head. Tubbo winced and it took everything in Tommy to not shove Dream's hand away. To shove Dream himself away. "I did feed it, just enough. It's alive isn't it?" Tommy's hands curled in to fists. 'It' Dream didn't see Tubbo as a human. Dream, the sick bastard he was, saw Tubbo as an object. Something he owned.

Tommy felt so powerless. He couldn't do anything to stop Dream. He couldn't stop whatever the project was, he couldn't stop him from hurting Tubbo. He wanted to, he'd do anything, but he was so *scared*. "How about this" Dream walked into the room past the boys. "If you two behave perfectly, I'll let you have contact with each other for a minute."

They were on their best behavior. The end of the day neared. Tommy had sat as close to Tubbo as possible without touching him. He did his best to not fidget. He focused on listening to Tubbo's breathing. When Dream said their minute started Tubbo was surprisingly the first one to move. He clung to Tommy desperately and buried his head in Tommy's chest. Tommy wrapped his arms around Tubbo's body, ignoring how bony it was and how hard it was trembling. He pressed his face into the ram hybrid's hair. They stayed like that the entire minute until Dream said to separate. Tubbo moved away from him instantly like he was burned by Tommy. He moved *too fast*.

Dream left with Tubbo. Tommy watched them till they were out of sight around the corner. When Dream came back and took him to the cabin he was uncharacteristically silent. He glared at the floor. Tommy was powerless now, but the second that changed he'd make Dream pay. For hurting him, for hurting Tubbo, and Quackity, and their families and whoever else had the unpleasant privilege of Dream affecting their life. He'd make Dream pay and he wouldn't hold back.

Dream left the underground structure. He still needed another enderpearl to complete his project. The book was almost deciphered, it was only a matter of time. He was walking through the forest when an arrow flew by his head. It just barely missed. He turned and

looked to see where the origin of the arrow was. The first thing he noticed about the figure were the huge gray wings. His hand found the hilt of his sword.

Philza

Chapter End Notes

Comment: mentions muzzle

Me halfway through writing this: 0-0

Failure

Chapter Summary

Just watched Tommy's stream

I have so many emotions

Sorry it's kinda short I'll try to get the next chapter out later tonight <3

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Dream unsheathed his sword as he met eyes with Phil. The king lowered the bow and stared at him. Technoblade appeared at his side, trident in hand. Dream cursed inwardly. He knew, despite his pride, he was not match for both Phil and Techno. If it was one or the other he could handle himself, but up against both he stood no chance. His grip tightened on his sword.

If he didn't need that enderpearl- if that fucking pest didn't destroy his last one. Fury climbed up his throat. After he somehow managed to deal with this two he decided he'd beat the ram senseless over this. He was so close to completing his goal and of course it was the ram he so kindly let live that put his plan in jeopardy. It was always the ram's fault.

He moved his body into a fighting position. Before he could even engage in the fight he felt something on his back. He was so lost in thought he didn't notice the third person. A sword poked out of his stomach as he looked down. Hot pain surged through his body. He turned his head slightly and met the piercing gaze of the President. The sword was removed and Dream started to fall forward.

Technoblade moved towards him and restrained Dream. He was so caught off guard he didn't even get to fight. The trio was kind of surprised by how easy it was to take him down. He was so cocky thinking no one would find him he didn't bother trying to travel the forest hidden nor with ample gear. Once he was restrained Techno poured a little bit of a healing potion over the wound. Not enough to heal Dream completely, they wanted it to hurt, but enough to prevent him from dying before they returned to the Antarctic Empire. Death wouldn't be good enough for all the suffering he has inflicted on their youngest family members.

They left Dream to be supervised by the dozen or so guards who stayed a little behind as the confronted Dream. Wilbur was back in the Antarctic Empire because they couldn't leave it

leaderless. Schlatt dropped the bloodied sword and turned to the direction Dream had came from. The trio walked forward and looked to see where his base was.

They stumbled upon a door. Phil forced it open and they looked down. A long and deep staircase sat before them. After an uneasy breath he grabbed a torch and they made their way down the stairs. Schlatt looked around at the gray hallways. They were near identical. He hoped the boys hadn't tried to escape on their own. They wouldn't have made it very far and he imagined Dream wouldn't have been pleased.

Phil poked his head into a doorway of a room. In the center was a ring of boxes that held glowing orbs. He raised an eyebrow as it was something he'd never seen before. They looked familiar, but he wasn't exactly sure what they were. They continued walking. While walking down the hall they spotted another out of place door. It was smaller than the rest. They tried to open the door but it was locked. Technoblade pulled out an axe and raised it above his head. He swung it down on the doorknob and the door cracked open. They all held their breath as Schlatt hesitantly opened the door.

Light poured into the room and the first thing Schlatt saw was his son's fearful gaze. It shifted when their eyes met to one of surprise. He heard Phil behind him gasp but he ignored it. Schlatt sunk down to his knees instantly in front of Tubbo. Seeing *his son* look up at him with such a scared expression hurt. He reached his hands up and grabbed his son's face. Where his hands should be touching skin he felt trembling metal instead. He tried to keep his emotions off of his face. He didn't want Tubbo to think he was mad at him. (He wasn't sure he'd ever be able to be mad at his son after this)

He reached back and found the fastening for the muzzle. After a little bit of struggle he managed to undo it and it fell to the floor. Red marks were left on his face where the outline of muzzle had been. Tubbo hesitantly brought up a hand to touch his face as tears filled his eyes. Schlatt pulled Tubbo into his arms.

It didn't sit right with him, the way Tubbo cried silently into his chest. He felt the tears soak his shirt but Tubbo didn't make a single sound. He just held Tubbo tighter. His son was back with his abuser for weeks. *Weeks*. It took them so long to find him. Schlatt grit his teeth. His son was muzzled and trapped in a small room for who knows how long. Hours? Days? Had he been locked in here the whole time?

Tubbo's crying slowed and he slumped into Schlatt's chest. He adjusted Tubbo in his arms and stood up slowly. He was light- Schlatt didn't think he should be that light. His stomach flipped. It was only a couple of weeks and Tubbo looked worse than he did when he first came to Manberg. What had happened to his son?

Tubbo's head rested on Schlatt's shoulder, his teary face buried in his father's neck as he was carried in his arms. That's when he saw the bruises. Besides his son's obvious black eye he noticed the dark purple that wrapped around his neck. He turned and Phil looked down at Tubbo sadly. He reached up and touched the boy's neck lightly. Tubbo flinched back. Phil removed his hand instantly.

He didn't want to think about what it was like for Tubbo to get those bruises. He didn't want to think what it was like for Tubbo to be curled up alone in the dark while being fucking muzzled. He didn't want to think about the fact he probably had more injuries hidden behind his thin clothes. He didn't want to think about the fact he lost so much weight in only a couple of weeks.

"Do you know if Tommy is here?" Techno asked the boy. Tubbo glanced over to the right. The king looked up the hallway. "Okay" Phil said. He turned back to Tubbo and Schlatt. "You two.. stay here. We'll get Tommy" they disappeared down the hallway.

Schlatt took a few steps towards the exit of the building to get Tubbo away from the small room. He gently lowered himself and Tubbo back onto the floor. Tubbo looked up at him and something in Schlatt broke. It's what he looked like the first time he had a nightmare, the first time Schlatt raised his voice in front of the boy (not at Tubbo no, gods no, *never* at Tubbo) he looked so small and broken. Schlatt swore to himself he'd keep him safe. He told himself he'd make sure Tubbo wouldn't have to feel so scared again. That he wouldn't let him get hit, or trapped, or face any of the other treatment Dream subjected him to. His free hand curled around his son's as he ran his fingers through the boy's hair gently. He said he'd protect Tubbo.

And he failed.

Chapter End Notes

I know Dream was taken down easily okay, I don't write fight scenes-

Did the title scare you? I thought maybe people would think they failed in saving the boys :>

Safe

Chapter Summary

Pog

It was easy to find where Tommy was. Among the seemingly endless gray hallways they stumbled upon a door with a handful of locks. Unlike the one on Tubbo's door these locks didn't have keys, so the pair could open it easily without having to break it. He pushed the door open and froze in the doorway.

Phil looked around at the familiar interior of the room. He'd only been in the cabin once but he recognized it instantly. Techno did too. He heard footsteps and Tommy appeared from around the corner. The first thing he did was scan the boy for injuries. Luckily, he looked fine. He had dark circles under his eyes and his hair was a mess but he was unharmed. Physically at least. Tommy looked up from the ground and saw Phil standing there. The box in his hand dropped.

Tommy crossed the distance before Phil could say anything. He was nearly knocked down by the sudden impact Tommy made on his chest. Phil wrapped his arms and wings around his youngest son. For the first time in weeks his shoulders relaxed. Phil had been so incredibly worried for Tommy, for both of them really. Now he stood with Tommy safe in his arms, Tubbo was safe and not too far. They were safe.

When Tommy first saw Phil his immediate reaction was to hug him. It wasn't like Tommy had sat up at night wishing for his dad to hug him, to tell him he'd be okay, of course not he was a big man. He wanted the hug to last forever. He soaked up every second of affection he was given. The second they separated he bombarded the man with questions. "You're here? How? What happened to Dream? Is Tubbo okay? Did you find Tubbo where is Tubbo?" He grabbed Phil's arms.

Phil gently pried his hands off of him, *when had he started to squeeze so hard?* Despite him being overbearing Phil just smiled gently. "Tubbo is fine Tommy, he is with Schlatt." The panic in his mind eased. Tommy wasn't sure what he'd do if he was saved and Tubbo wasn't. He felt guilty enough already. "Dream is restrained"

He stared at his dad a few more moments. His mind processing the situation before it dawned on him. His family was here, Tubbo was okay, Dream was taken care of. They'd get to leave, they were *saved*. He sobbed. Tommy wasn't one to usually cry, but this was long over due. His whole time with Dream was spent worrying about Tubbo and convincing himself he

wasn't slowly breaking. Now that the threat of Dream was no longer hanging over his head the bottle holding his emotions was smashed open.

Phil pulled him back into the hug. Technoblade stood behind the two a little awkwardly. He wasn't big on comfort nor hugs. Still, he was glad Tommy was safe. He was glad both the boys were safe and Dream was restrained. He stood silently fuming. The pig hybrid wanting nothing more than to slowly tear Dream apart. He wanted Dream to endure all the pain and suffering he inflicted on his younger brother(s) and then some. He didn't know how someone could be so cruel to children. Innocent children who did nothing more than exist in the wrong place at the wrong time.

"I'm sorry" Tommy sobbed. "I shouldn't- I shouldn't have left" his grip on Phil's shirt tightened. The king's heart dropped. Tommy had been stuck here for over a week and that was what he was worried about? "Tommy it's okay. I shouldn't have put you in your room"

Tommy's sobs grew quieter as time went on. He seemed to almost relax again before jolting in Phil's hold. "Tubbo needs food" he pulled away and looked up at Phil. The king had noticed Tubbo was rather skinny when they found him but the urgency in Tommy's tone concerned him. Noticing the look on his face Tommy continued. "I don't think Dream has fed him really anything since taking him."

Phil's wings straighten out in surprise. Tubbo had been here a long time to have not ate anything. Ender, he really wanted to kill Dream. "Okay, okay" he turned. He could practically feel the gray hairs on his head growing in numbers. "Techno, do you have food?"

Techno rummaged through his bag before pulling out a small pouch of berries. Phil lead Tommy out of the room, the boy took one last glance at the fake cabin, and they walked back towards Tubbo and Schlatt. Tommy felt his heart beat fast in his chest.

He couldn't believe he cried. Tommy had no reason to cry. *Tubbo was the one who got hurt not him. Why was he crying? He wasn't injured nor starving.* Tommy's fingernails dug into his palms. *Tommy always played the victim. He always made everything about him. Tubbo needed comfort, he didn't. It was selfish to take it for himself. Selfish, Tommy was selfish.*

If Phil knew that was what he was thinking he'd probably be given a long lecture. He tried to remind himself that he was allowed to be affected by Dream's mental abuse. It was okay to react, normal even. Phil told him injuries weren't necessary for trauma. Tommy knew this logic, he understood it, it just didn't feel right. He didn't feel like he should be upset. He didn't *feel* like he should be traumatized. He just felt guilty.

When he saw Tubbo in Schlatt's arms he rushed forward instantly much like with Phil. Schlatt moved back slightly so Tommy had plenty of room to throw his arms around the smaller teen. Finally, he could hug Tubbo on his own terms. They could hug without Dream watching, waiting to tear them apart again. He set his chin on top of Tubbo's hair. They had a long way to go in terms of healing. It would be a while before they were okay.

But for now they were *safe*.

Rest

Chapter Summary

I can't believe you guys don't trust me

I wrote this instead of working on my graphic design project

When they separated from the hug Tommy fumbled to grab the berries Techno had given him. Tommy held them out to Tubbo and he took them eagerly. Phil took a few steps so he was next to them and offered Tubbo a bottle of water. After he took that Phil and Techno turned so they looked down the hallway away from the others. *Tubbo didn't like being watched.*

With the water Tubbo managed to get the handful of berries down. He was grateful for the food, he had been so hungry since he woke up a few hours ago before the door opened. He thought he might have thrown up if he had anything in his stomach to throw up. He leaned backwards slightly and his head landed on his dad's chest. The rise and fall as the President breathed was comforting. He wanted to touch his dad, to remind him he was real. To remind him all of this was real. He'd had dreams recently like this, the others coming to save them. He needed reminded this wasn't one of them.

His dad's arms wrapped around him again and Tubbo felt Schlatt rest his forehead on his hair. He felt safe and secure in his arms. Tubbo closed his eyes and he felt Tommy stand up. "We should go" Technoblade said after a moment. The ram boy wanted to sit in his father's arms forever, but he also had no desire to stay in this place any longer. Tubbo somewhat reluctantly pulled away from his father's arms and stood on shaky legs. He went to take a step forward but Schlatt put his hand on his shoulder. The President leaned down slightly "Do you want me to carry you kiddo?" He asked. Tubbo glanced at the long hallway they had to walk down, which was only a small part of the journey, and nodded. Schlatt moved in front of him and crouched down. Tubbo hesitantly climbed on his back and held on when Schlatt straightened. It felt weird being higher than normal. He wrapped his arms around Schlatt's neck. Safe. It felt safe. He rested his head on his dad's shoulder and closed his eyes again.

Tommy looked at Phil with puppy dog eyes. Phil scoffed. "Your legs are perfectly fine Tommy" The younger blonde pretended to be sad as he looked at the ground pouting. Phil tried to hide his amused smile. Techno rolled his eyes and stepped forward. "C'mon Theseus" he crouched down in front of him. Tommy's face lit up as he practically jumped onto Techno's back. They walked back up out of the gray structure. Tommy's wings twitched when they finally made it out and he saw the sky.

Then he looked out in front of them and tensed. Dream sat tied up surrounded by a few guards. His hold on Techno became tighter. Tubbo, luckily, had fallen asleep on Schlatt's back, so he didn't see Dream. Dream was tied up but seeing him still put a knot in Tommy's stomach. He could imagine Tubbo wouldn't have reacted very well. Dream met eyes with him. He could tell Dream was angry, furious even. Phil, who was at the front of the group now, put his wing out protectively in front of the boys. Dream's gaze shifted over to Phil and they glared at each other.

The guards looked at them as they walked up. "Well then, let's go" Phil announced. The guards grabbed Dream and pulled him along as they walked. They stood behind the rest with Dream opting to put some distance between the man and the kids. Phil stood between the two groups with his sword in hand.

When they arrived in the Antarctic Empire Dream was locked up immediately and the boys were taken to the infirmary. Schlatt watched as they carefully removed Tubbo's shirt to check for injuries. Phil had to stop him from going down to the dungeon and murdering Dream. He stared down at his son's torso. It was littered in various bruises and it was skinny, too skinny. Schlatt could count his ribs. He felt guilty, oh so guilty, how could he let this happen? How could they let this happen? They promised they'd protect the boys. Phil put a hand on his shoulder.

Tommy didn't have injuries to look at, he was a little dehydrated though. Tommy explained that the fake cabin ran out of water and Dream hadn't replaced it yet. So they gave him some water. He sat by Tubbo's side the whole time. Phil tried to get him to go sleep in his own bed but he refused, he wouldn't leave Tubbo's side.

When Tubbo woke up again the next morning Tommy and Schlatt were there. Schlatt put a hand on his cheek and rubbed his thumb over part of the still barely red spot the muzzle left. Schlatt couldn't imagine what it felt like to be muzzled. He also had no idea why Dream deemed it necessary. In the short month he spent with Tubbo the boy was soft spoken. He wasn't like Tommy who could talk for hours. Half of the time he looked for permission to speak when he was with anyone but Tommy.

Tubbo leaned his head into Schlatt's hand. "Hey kid" Schlatt murmured. When he tried to remove his hand Tubbo grabbed his wrist desperately. A moment passed and he pulled his hand away quickly as if he just realized what he did. Schlatt just offered him a small tired smile and put his hand back to holding Tubbo's face. He ignored the way Tubbo flinched.

"Tubbo" Tommy said. Tubbo's eyes snapped over to Tommy. He didn't meet Tommy's eyes, he couldn't, he looked at the familiar green bandana that sat on his neck instead. "I was so worried about you big man" Tommy's hand found Tubbo's. Tubbo was worried for Tommy too but he couldn't say it. He squeezed Tommy's hand once hoping he'd get the message. Tommy's sad smile widened.

“Dream is locked up. He won’t be able to get to either of you anymore.” They all turned to see Phil enter the room. Wilbur and Techno following behind. “Tubbo!” Wilbur called happily. He hadn’t seen Tubbo yet, only Tommy when they first arrived. He moved forward and ruffled the boy’s hair. Tubbo and Tommy both relaxed completely.

For the first time in weeks they didn’t need to worry about staying on Dream’s good side. They didn’t need to worry about themselves. They didn’t need to worry about each other. Tommy didn’t need to worry about Dream’s ominous plan. Tubbo didn’t need to worry about messing up. The only thing they needed to worry about now was healing.

Not your fault

Chapter Summary

You can finally have your Tommy angst ok

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Tommy left Tubbo's side for the first time a few nights later. He stood in his room with Phil standing in the doorway. He had just finished changing when his father knocked. "I wanted to talk to you alone Tommy" he started. Phil moved from the doorway and closed the door behind him. He stood in front of Tommy who looked at him curiously.

"about what happened with Dream" Phil continued. Tommy sucked in a breath. He knew this was going to come eventually. Especially with Tubbo being unable to talk. The older teen hadn't said a word so far, one of the doctors said it was best he didn't talk until the bruises on his neck healed more. "Well.. Tubbo-" Phil cut him off. "I didn't want to talk about Tubbo"

Tommy froze. "I want to talk about you, Tommy" Tommy's shoulder dropped. He didn't want to talk about that. "Oh" They looked at each other for a few uncomfortable moments. Phil sighed and put his hand over his mouth. "We know what happened to Tubbo, roughly, due to fact the affects are more ah.. physical. You haven't told us anything about what happened to you though Toms" Tommy looked at the ground.

What happened to him? What did happen? Nothing worth talking over. Dream.. he didn't hurt Tommy. Sure he made Tommy blame himself for things that happened to Tubbo, and told him his family wasn't coming for him because they didn't care. But Dream never *hurt* him right? Those things didn't matter.

"Nothing happened" Phil gave him a look. He turned on his heels and walked to his dresser picking up a book to return it to his bookshelf. Before Phil could continue he cut him off. "How are you dad?" The king walked further in the room towards his son. "Tommy you-" The blonde turned. "How are you?" He was avoiding the question. Avoiding the conversation. Phil realized this wasn't going to be easy. He took a deep breath. "I'm good Tommy, now please"

"Thats great. This book is cool innit? I finished reading it yesterday. I read the last few chapters out loud to Tubbo to help him fall asleep. The ending was kind of-" Phil grabbed his wrist that held the book. "Tommy" he said, his voice had an edge to it. Tommy's jaw snapped shut and he looked up at Phil.

“I’m fine” he said pulling his wrist away and he put the book on the shelf. “You aren’t” Phil insisted. Tommy glared at the bookshelf. He didn’t know what Phil wanted. What was he supposed to say? How much he fucked up at Tubbo’s expense? Is that what Phil wanted to hear? To have Tommy admit how much of a fuck up he was? Just like Dream said?

“Nothing happened” he looked up at the king. Phil grabbed Tommy’s shoulders. “Tommy, you cried in my arms when I first saw you. That’s not ‘fine’. Something had to have happened to you to create a response like that.” Tommy looked away. He was fine.

“Mate please” Phil insisted. He was worried for Tommy. Bottling up emotions was never healthy. “Dream just said some stuff ‘s no big deal” he admitted. Phil lead him over to the bed and they sat next to each other. “What kind of stuff?” He asked.

Tommy’s fingers fidgeted in his lap. He glared at his hands. He didn’t want to admit to being weak and powerless. He didn’t want to admit to being so affected by words. Just words. He bet Technoblade wouldn’t have been hurt by words. His eyes felt hot again. Ender, he was going to cry a second time. Tommy wanted to hit himself. He didn’t have a right to cry, he *shouldn’t* be crying. Why is he crying?

Phil’s arm wrapped around his shoulder and it broke him out of his thoughts. Tommy broke. He started to spill everything that happened. Every interaction that was laced with cruel words and unfair accusations. Every thing Dream told him was his fault. Every lie Dream said about his family. He spoke so fast Phil could barely keep up. At the end he was left gasping for air as he sobbed. Phil had wrapped both his arms around Tommy by then, wings too acting as a protective shield.

“None of this is your fault kid” Phil spoke into his hair. “I mean Tommy, you’re a kid, nothing is your fault. It’s Dream’s. You didn’t do anything wrong” Tommy pulled away and looked up at Phil. “I left when you told me not to” he said. Phil gently wiped his tears away with his thumb. “That doesn’t make everything your fault. That was mine really, I shouldn’t have locked you in here”

Tommy lowered his head and Phil put his hand on the back of it. “Tommy listen to me please” the boy hummed in acknowledgment. “Dream lied to you about a lot of things. Whatever he said, please don’t believe it.” Easier said than done. He agreed anyways. Phil seemed to relax at that. The door opened and the two looked up. Techno and Wilbur stood in the doorway. The pig hybrid looked reluctant as Wilbur pulled him into the room.

Tommy glared. “What are you doin in my room dickheads?” He asked, there was no aggression in his voice. “We’re having a baby brother needs cheered up family sleep over” Wilbur explained. Tommy looked to Phil who just shrugged while smiling. Wilbur set his pillow down on Tommy’s bed and Tommy kicked it off the bed. “You aren’t sleeping on my bed bitch. You can sleep on the floor”

Wilbur poked him in the head. “Careful Toms, I’ll sleep on you if you keep swearing at me.” Techno scoffed. “Seriously, where’d you learn all that bad language from anyways?” Tommy just swore at them some more.

The family all curled up on Tommy's bed together. The bed was fairly large so they fit fine squished together. Phil's wings draped over all three of his children. Tommy was curled into Wilbur's chest. Techno had hesitated to lay down at first, he didn't like physical contact after all but Wilbur insisted. They all slept peacefully that night, for the first time in weeks Tommy was nightmare free.

Chapter End Notes

I published this like 8 days ago and it's already at almost 25,000 words

One day

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Tubbo's hand sat in his fathers as they walked into their home. He was finally going back to Manberg. The bruises were almost completely healed and his weight was increasing to near healthy again. He was excited to be able to sleep in his bed again, and to see Big Q. His missed Quackity a lot it seemed like it had been forever since he saw him. Especially because for a while he didn't know if the Vice President was okay.

He didn't deserve to see Quackity, it was his fault the man got stabbed. Dream always reminded him of that. He squeezed Schlatt's hand tighter. Quackity didn't blame him, Schlatt didn't blame him, so he shouldn't blame himself.

Tommy was planning on coming to Manberg again in a few days. Tubbo hated the idea of being separated but Tommy didn't want to leave the Antarctic Empire just yet. He understood. They both just wanted to be at home. So they hugged goodbye and Tommy promised to go to Manberg soon. The second they entered the White House Quackity pulled Tubbo into a tight hug. "I'm sorry I couldn't stop him" Quackity still felt terrible. He was right there but Dream had disarmed him easily. Maybe if he had tried harder. Tubbo wanted to tell him it was fine, of course it was, but he couldn't.

The bruises were healed but Tubbo still couldn't speak. It was frustrating in a way. He wanted to speak, there was so much he wanted to say, but he just couldn't. Physically couldn't, his body stopped itself. He'd been writing things down until now but it wasn't very convenient. Every time he tried he felt hands on his neck and *he couldn't breath*. His hand subconsciously moved up to his neck as he stared down. Schlatt seems to notice this and Quackity frowned.

Schlatt pulled his fiancé to the side a second and spoke to him quietly. He told Quackity about Tubbo not talking. Not in detail, he'd explain later. The Vice President looked at the boy sadly. It was late by the time they had arrived so the trio went and ate dinner. It was bittersweet. The couple was happy to have Tubbo sitting at the table with them again, but his silence was unsettling. Even if he was quite before he usually said *something*.

Tubbo could only stomach around half the meal. Schlatt gave Quackity an 'I'll explain later' look. The Vice President did his best to make jokes that got Tubbo to smile at least. Tubbo was grateful.

Tubbo took a shower after dinner. He stared in the mirror at his appearance. He was still skinner than he should be but definitely not as bad as he had been. He didn't want to know what he looked like then. He slipped his pajama shirt on covering it. He turned and saw green. It made him flinch back violently into the counter. When he opened his eyes it was a towel, just a towel. A green towel. That's all it took, the color green. Maybe that's why Phil was wearing blue.

Tubbo felt sick. He hated being so jumpy. It was just a towel after all. But green- it looked like Dream. In that split second Dream was there. And Tubbo, Tubbo was doing something he shouldn't. He was using the bathroom and Dream was there and he was mad Tubbo was going to get punished he didn't want to be hurt- his breathing had picked up now. He realized he was hyperventilating and Dream wasn't there. His shaky hand struggled with the doorknob.

Tears had already made their way down his face as he entered the kitchen again. He was still breathing heavy. Schlatt was speaking to Quackity quietly when he entered. The second Schlatt saw Tubbo's distressed state he was in front of his son instantly. "Oh jeez, bud you gotta breathe" he said. He gently grabbed Tubbo's face and his hands and tilted it up. "Tubbo c'mon kid breathe in and out"

Tubbo tried his best to slow his breathing. Schlatt gave comforting words of encouragement the entire time. He was vaguely aware of Quackity being at his side as well. He opened his mouth, to apologize, and the words died in his throat. Instead he just whimpered and fell forward into Schlatt's arms.

Schlatt hated seeing his son like this. He hated the way he obviously wanted to speak but stopped himself. Quackity wrapped his arms around Tubbo from the other side. The two completely protecting Tubbo in their arms. The couple shared a sad look over Tubbo's head. They both felt a surge of protectiveness and anger.

Tubbo would heal eventually Schlatt reminded himself. There would be a day he wouldn't flinch. He'd be able to look people (other than Schlatt) in the eyes, he'd be able to speak without panicking. One day he could handle seeing the color green. Quackity and Schlatt would be there every step of the way.

And the next morning when Tubbo went into the bathroom and noticed the green towels were gone, he didn't question it.

Chapter End Notes

By the way, this fic isn't ending yet. I still have another plot line to finish. Even then I have those oneshots I still plan on writing.

Recovery

Schlatt sat criss crossed at the end of Tubbo's bed. The boy's head was in his lap as he ran his fingers through Tubbo's hair gently. Tubbo's eyes were closed and he looked peaceful as ever. He enjoyed the affection that wasn't tainted with manipulating words. A hand in his hair that had never caused him pain. Schlatt was more than happy to provide Tubbo with that comfort. He'd do anything for Tubbo just to make him happy.

He moved his fingers slowly, pausing and going even gentler when his hand got caught a tangle in Tubbo's hair. Tubbo's ears twitched happily as the two sat in a comfortable silence. Schlatt stared down at his son. He knew Tubbo wasn't completely happy and it made him feel bad. The bruises were gone but that didn't mean he could no longer see them. It filled his mind constantly. Tubbo's neck wrapped in dark purple bruises, that muzzle secured tightly around his face. Every time it made him feel sick. He didn't want to think about it but he couldn't help it.

He figured Tubbo thought about it too. He was the one who went through it after all. Schlatt didn't know many of the details of course, Tubbo was still silent. He wanted to know what happened, everything that was done to cause his son to be so hurt. He wanted to know how to fix it. At the same time he wasn't sure he could handle hearing about it. His hand paused in Tubbo's hair.

Tubbo was strangled, that much was obvious. For a long time too it seemed because of how dark the bruises were. At first Schlatt assumed that was why he didn't talk, because it hurt. The injuries healed and his son still didn't talk. It worried Schlatt greatly. Tubbo wanted to, he opened his mouth it was obvious he wanted to speak but he stopped himself. Schlatt couldn't understand why. He wanted to know. Did Dream do more physical damage they couldn't see? Did Dream threaten him?

"Tubs" The boy's eyes opened slowly and he looked up at his father. Schlatt moved Tubbo's hair out of his face and looked down at him. "You know you're allowed speak right bud?" Tubbo turned onto his side and buried his face in Schlatt's stomach. The man returned to petting the boy's hair. Tubbo nodded after a moment. "Is there a reason you aren't speaking?" Another nod.

Schlatt chewed on his lip. Questioning him wasn't very helpful when he only nodded. Not that he blamed Tubbo. He grabbed the smaller ram and pulled him up so he was sitting on his lap. Tubbo's head rested on his chest. The ram boy listened to his father's heartbeat. "Do you want to tell me about it? It doesn't have to be verbal."

Tubbo stared at the wall silently. Did he want to tell him about it? It was pretty stupid after all. Tubbo wanted to speak so he should be able to shouldn't he? He curled in on himself in frustration. He reached a hand up and set it on his neck. Schlatt sucked in a breath. "The bruises? Does your throat still hurt?" Schlatt would get him more medicine if he needed to.

Tubbo shook his head. Schlatt thought for a moment. It had to do with him being choked but not the bruises itself. “Does talking.. remind you of being choked?” A nod. Schlatt’s heart dropped. He wrapped his arms around the boy and rested his chin on his fluffy brown hair.

“Is that why he did it then? Because you said something?” Tubbo’s hand reached up and gripped the front of his shirt. Schlatt glared at the floor. Dream muzzled Tubbo for talking, why did he need to strangle him too? Unless he did that before and only used the muzzle because it didn’t work. Not that it was okay. How gross do you have to be to hurt a child for speaking?

“How many times... did he do that?” Schlatt wanted him to say once. He wanted so badly for Tubbo to just hold up one finger. Being choked was traumatizing enough, having it done multiple times? It made even him shiver a bit. Tubbo’s hand released his shirt and he held them up. 8 fingers. Schlatt saw red.

He pulled Tubbo closer into his chest. Tubbo closed his eyes again. It felt weirdly relieving to tell his dad about it. His dad didn’t write off his reasoning for not talking. He was understanding. The President was even protective. Tubbo felt secure in his arms. The boy knew Dream was locked up. He knew Dream was in a completely different kingdom. Yet it was only here in his dad’s arms that he felt completely safe.

Even though Tubbo was taken and Schlatt hadn’t stopped it like he promised, Tubbo didn’t blame him nor Quackity. Dream was scary and powerful. Plus, they rescued him and Tommy. So Tubbo trusted Schlatt, he knew his dad would protect him the best he could. “I’m sorry kid” Schlatt said softly. Tubbo closed his eyes again.

Tubbo’s mouth opened and closed a few times as the words kept dying in his throat. There was a lot he wanted to say. A lot he couldn’t say. “I-“ he choked out. Schlatt froze and looked down at Tubbo with wide eyes. His hold on the boy became a little looser giving him some more space. Tubbo didn’t look up or open his eyes as he spoke. There was a lot he couldn’t say, but he managed this. “love you” he mumbled.

Schlatt’s surprised expression melted. He returned to holding Tubbo to his chest. He kissed the top of the boy’s head and leaned back. “I love you too kiddo”

Quackity walked in an hour later. He smiled when seeing the two sleeping together. The Vice President quietly grabbed the blanket on Tubbo’s bed and draped it over their shoulders. He’d sleep alone tonight, but that was fine he thought as he turned off the light and closed the door. He knew right now Tubbo needed his dad more than Quackity needed his fiancé.

A talk

Chapter Summary

The discord is pretty pog if you haven't joined it yet

Phil and Schlatt stood in front of the cell. His unsettling white eyes stared back at them, void of emotion and lifeless. When Phil first saw them he was really unsettled. Neither of them had the particular desire to be away from their kids talking to this man, but here they were doing it anyways. Dream's lip curled. "Wow, a visit from the king himself. I'm so honored."

There was a sadistic glint in his eyes as he stared up at the rulers. Schlatt stood with his arms crossed glaring at the man. Phil was at his side, his hand on the hilt of his sword. The room was silent and filled with a thick tension. Though the rulers had never really spoken to Dream before, they knew what he had done. And Dream knew they did. Earlier that day Schlatt had arrived in the Antarctic Empire so they could speak to Dream. Tommy had already been in Manberg for a few days.

When Schlatt first arrived he was angrier than he had been before. Phil asked about it and he explained the one sided conversation he had with Tubbo. Phil's resentment for Dream only grew. So now they stood in front of the man himself. Not a man really, no man could be so cruel, the being in front of them was nothing short of a monster. One that hid behind a smile and pretended to be a man. One who pretended to be a loving brother.

"What is the portal for?" Phil asked. That was the main subject of them confronting Dream. They needed to know about the portal. A few days ago he stumbled upon it in one of his books. The drawing was nearly identical. The portal was said to be in question on whether or not it was even real. People had searched for it before to no avail. No exact location, or even general area, was known.

Dream tried to open it. From the work he'd done so far it seemed he knew how. So here they were asking the question. Why. *Why did you take are sons? Why did you lock them in a cabin? Why did you hurt them? Why did you take them again? Why did you try to open that portal?*

"What portal?" Dream asked with a mocking innocence in his tone. Schlatt grunted. "You know damn well what portal we're talking about" The two stared at each other. Phil glanced at Schlatt from the corner of his vision. Dream tilted his head. "I'm surprised you're here instead of being drunk off your ass somewhere." He stood from where he sat on the old worn bed and crossed the room to stand in front of the bars.

Dream grabs the bars and leans forward smiling at the President. "How is Tubbo doing?" His tone was cruel. Schlatt somehow straightened even more as his glare intensified. He took a

menacing step towards Dream and Phil almost stopped him. Almost.

“I hope he hasn’t said anything. I’d hate to have to punish him for it when I get out.” Before he could even react Schlatt’s arm reeled backward. A crack rang out through the room. Dream’s head snapped to the side and he gripped his now bleeding and slight crooked nose with his hand. Schlatt rubbed his knuckles. A bunch of his pent up anger went into that punch.

It wasn’t beating the fuck out of him. It wasn’t starving him and muzzling him and manipulating him, it wasn’t punishment enough. It was barely the tip of the vengeance iceberg Schlatt was on. Barely a glimpse of the wrath he felt. Yet the punch was satisfying.

“You must be fucking stupid if you think you’ll get anywhere near my son again” Dream wiped the blood from his face onto the back of his hand. He chuckled a bit, as if Schlatt’s anger was funny. Phil looked at Schlatt who was becoming increasingly hostile the more Dream spoke. While he too wanted to beat the shit out of him, they needed answers first.

“I don’t know why you’re so mad” Dream said. He gestured with his arms as he spoke. “The brat is perfect. Obedient and well mannered.” Schlatt’s hand curled around the front of Dream’s shirt and yanked him forward into the bars. Dream grunted as Schlatt spoke. “He isn’t ‘well mannered’ you sick fuck. The kid is terrified.” Dream threw his arms up in surrender. A cruel smile graced his lips as he looked Schlatt dead in the eyes.

“Good.”

Schlatt’s hand reached down to his pocket. The pocket that held the keys to the cell. His mind was rage. He was going to make Dream pay. Phil grabbed his wrist and the President turned to him angrily. “He is getting you riled up so you open the cell. Don’t give him what he wants” he pulled Schlatt away from Dream. Phil was sure he was provoking Schlatt for a reason, he probably had a plan of sorts. Phil would not let that happen.

“The portal” Phil said moving the conversation away from Tubbo and back to the original point. Dream’s smile dropped and he rolled his eyes. “Where does it go?” Dream ignored him and collapsed onto the bed. Phil stared down at the Dream in his pitiful state. Stripped of his armor, and with his face revealed he didn’t look menacing. It was still the same person Phil reminded himself. Still the same twisted mind.

“I won’t tell you” Dream spoke. Phil sighed. He figured something like this might happen. Really, questioning was probably a waste of time. He motioned to Schlatt and they turned to leave. Phil didn’t want to bother continuing the conversation, not today anyways. “But” they stopped. Phil turned back to Dream who was picking at his nails absentmindedly. “I’ll tell Tommy”

Phil straightens and his wings puffed out a bit. “Absolutely not” he wouldn’t let Tommy nor Tubbo near Dream. The boys had been hurt enough by him. “Oh come on Philza Minecraft throw me a bone here! I just want to see my little brother.” Phil marched back up to the front of the cell. The fact he had the audacity to refer to Tommy as his family sickened him. All he did was hurt Tommy and take him from his actual family. “He isn’t your *brother*. He is your victim and you’re his abuser. That is the extent of your relationship”

Dream scoffed and sat back up. "I never laid a hand on him" they made eye contact. Phil looked down at Dream. "That doesn't make a difference"

Schlatt hummed in agreement behind him. Phil turned, his robe sweeping behind him. "Fine" he walked past Schlatt and slammed the door open. "You can rot in here" The President followed behind and the door closed locking again. Dream watched as they left. A smile sat on his face.

Poetic Justice

Chapter Summary

Brother fluff :>

If you haven't already you should join the discord it's actually really cool

Tommy and Tubbo sat together in the living room of the White House. Neither of them spoke. They just sat side by side in near silence. Their only other company was the fire that provided a comforting warmth. Being near each other was enough. They didn't need to speak, or do anything. Tubbo's hand was on Tommy's and his eyes were closed.

He needed to be touching someone. Every time he closed his eyes, he was back in that small dark room all alone. Tommy's hand stabilized him. Usually he'd do this with Schlatt. His hand in the older ram hybrid's or he'd lean his head on Schlatt's shoulder. The President never minded Tubbo's company, but his father had gone back to the Antarctic Empire for a day. So he sat with Tommy instead.

Tommy needed him too. He didn't see anything when he closed his eyes, but he hated being alone. Quackity was in the kitchen making food. Tommy was worried. Tubbo still hadn't said anything, not even to him. Not that he knew of anyways. A stranger might have thought he'd love this. Tommy rambled a lot and could talk for hours. Still, he liked having conversations with Tubbo. There was no point in talking if he didn't respond. There was no point in jokes if he didn't laugh.

It almost felt like they were back in the cabin. They'd have nights like this sometimes after Dream was particularly harsh. Just sitting together. Both of them with a lot to say but no courage to speak. It was the same now. They were just a little older, just a little more broken. Their hands just a little tighter around each others.

Tubbo gently bumped his horn into Tommy's shoulder. The blonde startles a bit looking at Tubbo. That was something he'd do when they were younger. He hadn't done it in years, nearly a decade. A small somewhat sad smile slipped onto his face. "I love you too Tubbo"

Techno and Wilbur walked down the stairs to the dungeon. Wilbur held a bag tight to his chest as Techno went in front of him holding keys and a torch. They weren't *supposed* to be here. Neither cared. They decided to anyways. What they were doing was good and necessary. Techno unlocked the door and slid into the room. They shut the door behind them.

Dream sat on the bed facing the room. He looked up at Technoblade and raised an eyebrow. Neither of the twins said anything. They walked up to the bars and Techno unlocked the

second door. Dream made no attempt to move as they did so. The iron door open and scraped against the ground.

“Hello again Technoblade” Dream said smiling. The pig hybrid glared at him. Wilbur dropped the bag onto the ground and leaned over opening it slowly. Dream watched curiously as he did so. He reached a hand in and pulled out one of the items. Dream’s smile fell.

The prisoner stood up and tried to move back but Techno grabbed his arms keeping him in place. He wouldn’t let Dream get out of this one. Wilbur approached him and Dream tried to yank his arms away. “Oh fuck off-“ he started. Wilbur clamped the muzzle over his face. When it was secure Techno let go and Dream scrambled away from them trying to get it off. He was cursing inside of his head.

“That looks rather uncomfortable” Techno commented. It was satisfying seeing him squirm. He deserved much more but this was a good start. Dream tried to speak. When that failed he just glared at the twins. Is this what Tubbo felt like? That’s fine, it deserved it. Techno stared at him expressionless while Wilbur grinned.

Without warning Technoblade stalked forward and grabbed Dream by his neck. He threw the man onto the ground and proceeded to kick him in the ribs. He continued this until he was tired and Wilbur joined in. Dream struggled and yelped the best he could pinned on the ground with his mouth covered. He could practically hear Sapnap’s words, telling him karma would catch up to him eventually. Yeah, karma, what a joke.

“You poor thing, muzzled and beaten. I can’t imagine how cruel someone would have to be to do that to another person” another kick to the side. Dream sat up and landed a solid punch to Wilbur’s jaw. Wilbur stumbled back and Techno pulled Dream away from advancing towards his twin. He shoved Dream back into the ground, raised his foot, and slammed it down on Dream’s throat. Dream’s hands instantly wrapped around Techno’s foot and his legs kicked out.

Wilbur regained his composure. “I have an idea, maybe we should tell the guards to stop bringing food. We should let you starve to death” his foot pressed down harder. Dream struggling weakened as his lungs burned. Wilbur interjected “but it’s okay Dream we *care* about you.” Wilbur kicked his head. It wasn’t karma, Dream told himself, he didn’t deserve this. He is a **god**. He doesn’t deserve to be kicked around like some mortal. He grabbed Wilbur’s ankle.

“Stop” a voice said. Techno’s foot released and he sat up. He could barely breath through his mouth with the muzzle on. Phil stood in the doorway. He hadn’t found the twins anywhere and had his suspicions. It seemed they were correct. He didn’t look angry, not as angry as the twins thought he would be. He just seemed a bit annoyed. “Techno” he motioned. They begrudgingly exited the cell. Phil looked down at Dream.

He stared at the muzzle. He told the twins to leave him alone yet he wasn’t that upset. He’d leave the muzzle on for now. If that meant Dream couldn’t eat the next few meals, so be it.

Enough

Chapter Summary

Sorry it took so long

They followed their father out of the dungeon. The two were upset they were stopped, Dream deserved it after all. At the same time Wilbur was kind of surprised Phil didn't have them remove the muzzle.

The twins tried to figure out how Phil felt. He had a cold angry look in his eyes but he didn't seem particularly mad besides that. His posture was relaxed and his wings hung loosely behind him. Once they were up out of the dungeon Phil turned and motioned for the bag in Wilbur's arms.

He looked through it and sighed. "I told you boys not to go down there" Techno grunted and looked away. He never understood why Phil insisted on protecting Dream. The scumbag deserved everything they did and so much worse. Who cares if they rough him up a little?

Wilbur felt much the same. He'd seen both Tommy and Tubbo after a nightmare in the first month they had them back. Both of them went through so much for only being 16. And then the week after, it was so much worse. He had broken these two children. These two precious little angels (well maybe not angel in Tommy's case). He had looked down at a young Tommy's trusting gaze and spewed lies. He'd looked down at Tubbo's fear and submission and return his obedience with punishment. Dream had seen the two cry and instead of providing comfort he chose to make it worse. How could someone do such a thing?

Phil set the bag to the side. "While you went against my direct orders" he began. He grinned slightly, "I'll let you off the hook just this once." Wilbur sighed relieved. Phil would be lying if he said seeing Dream in that state wasn't satisfying.

The twins went off to continue their day. Phil didn't bother adding more security to the prisoner, he knew the boys wouldn't try again. Not today anyways. He glanced back over at the bag. It seemed the muzzle was only the tip of the iceberg for what they planned. It would have been fitting for the man to meet such a fate, but still.

He wondered what Tommy and Tubbo would think of this. Tommy would probably laugh in Dream's face and call him a bitch. Tubbo would try to mask his positive feelings and feel bad about having them. He stretched his wings out. If anyone deserved to beat and muzzle Dream it was them. He wouldn't let them near him though. He didn't want them to fall victim to his manipulative words. It scared him, to think he could so easily trick Tommy into loving him. He didn't want Tommy to have to deal with that.

Plus they'd never learn about the portal if they kept this up. Dream seemed to be the only one who knew about it. How to open it, where it goes. Still.. maybe they didn't need to learn. Maybe, now that Dream was contained, it was best the portal remained hidden and forgotten about.

Tommy and Tubbo would return in a few days. They'd eat dinner together happily, Wilbur would braid the boys hair and Techno would spar with them. Tommy's laughs wouldn't be forced and Tubbo wouldn't be too afraid to smile with his head not tilted to the floor. They'd didn't need some big secret portal quest. They didn't need to uncover any secrets. The boys needed to heal, that was it. Together they would be a family and that would be enough.

Dream sat in his cell glaring at the wall. How could they do that to him? He *is a god*. They have the audacity to push him around. They treated him like some mortal. *Like a dog. Like Tubbo*. Once he got out of here they'd face his wrath. Every single one of them. Speaking of.. what was taking him so long? The boy was meant to get him out of here days ago. He'd spent more than enough time in the cell by now.

His hands tightened into fists. Why can no one do anything right? He grit his teeth. Tommy didn't listen, Tubbo didn't listen, now he didn't fucking listen. When Dream got his hands on the boy- the light shifted in the cell. He glanced up from the wall towards the source to see him appear. Speak of the devil..

He met eyes with him and the boy look startled. His eyes gazed over Dream's appearance. The boy took in every bruise and scrape, the handcuffs and muzzle. "W-what happened?" He questioned slowly. Dream stood and pulled on his restraints impatiently. The kid must be real stupid to ask him a question while his mouth is covered. The boy got the message and put his arms hesitantly on Dream's. He closed his eyes and Dream felt himself shift. He opened them and they stood in his quarters in his castle.

The boy reached up and undid his restraints. He then unbuckled the muzzle and it fell to the floor. Dream rubbed at his jaw absentmindedly. He had so much work to do. The portal, the kids. He needed them back. They were his, they belonged to him. He needed to get them back. His kingdom needed looked over and the boy. The boy he still had.

He turned and glared at him. The boy shifted his weight between his feet nervously. Dream adjusted his hoodie and ran a hand through his messy hair. "Ranboo" he says slowly. The boy tensed as he looked at Dream. "Yes sir?"

"What took you so long?"

Ranboo

Chapter Summary

You can thank the discord for the Ranboo angst plot line

Ranboo had grown up in the castle. Dream was the only person he really knew. His first 15 years were spent in Dream's quarters, he was forbidden from leaving alone. Sometimes he'd be allowed to follow Dream around but that was rare. Now he could leave, he was even spying in Manberg for Dream! Still, he had to return to the castle.

He knew Dream wasn't biologically related to him. It made sense. His skin was black and white, his eyes were a startling red and green. Two tiny horns sat poking out of his fluffy half and half hair. Dream well.. Dream was normal. Ranboo wasn't. But that was fine, he didn't need to look like Dream anyways.

Dream taught him everything he knew besides the few things he learned in books. He saved Ranboo as a baby from his parents who were trying to kill him. That's what he always said. The king raised Ranboo all by himself, besides a little help from Bad. A noble deed really, he already had a kingdom to rule over! Being a single parent was hard. Sure he wasn't around much but Ranboo understood. He loved his dad.

He and his dad did many things together when he was around. When he was younger he'd read him books and play games with him. Ranboo loved these moments. He was usually gone doing important work but when he was at home Ranboo was happy.

Ranboo did his best to be good for dad. He always kept his room clean and always went to bed on time. Sometimes he wasn't good, and sometimes he got punished. That was fine! He did bad, he deserved it. You had to be punished to be forgiven. That's what his papa always said.

One of his earliest memories with Dream is Dream giving him his grass block. He was very young when he got it, around 5, and he loved it very much. "Thanks papa!" He had happily babbled when he first got the block. He carried it around everywhere for almost a month. The hybrid still had it today. He'd carry blocky around sometimes for comfort. It was a birthday present. He didn't get many of those anymore, so he was happy he had that.

That was also around the same time Ranboo got his first punishment. He had broken something, a plate maybe, he didn't remember. Dream was angry. It was an accident but he still needed punishment. It made sense, how would he learn not to do it again without punishment? Dream made Ranboo hold out his hands, and then he hit them with a ruler he

called “The Stick”. It wasn’t a cruel punishment, 5 smacks on the knuckles and 5 on the palms. They were light too, barely even hurt. He still got punished the same way to this day. Though now it was a bit in the cruel side, not that Ranboo noticed.

When he was 7 he got a really bad stomach bug. Dream was sleeping in his room for once when Ranboo woke up in the middle of the night throwing up. At first he worried, Papa would be mad he made a mess on his sheets, but Dream just picked him up gently and carried him to the bathroom. He helped Ranboo lean over the toilet and rubbed circles into his back as he continued to throw up. He whispered words of comfort as he sobbed from the burning feeling in his throat. Dream was even kind enough to wait till the next morning to punish him for ruining the sheets.

Dream also read to him before. When he was younger he’d read Ranboo a book to help him fall asleep sometimes. He rarely slept in his quarters. Dream was always off somewhere doing something, so Ranboo was usually stuck with his friend Bad. Bad was kind to him most of the time. He never read Ranboo books. They were the only people Ranboo knew before going to Manberg.

Dream asked him to spy in Manberg. He joined the guard and stayed mostly in the background. His Papa told him to remain near invisible. His job was to watch the president and report back on everything he did. He remembers reporting to Dream about the ram boy who turned out to be the president’s son. Dream let his anger out on him that day...

That was fine! It was normal after all. Sure, the kids in Manberg didn’t have the same bruises as him but he assumed they just hid it. You wouldn’t want anyone to see marks from your punishments after all, they were a sign of being bad. Ranboo didn’t want anyone to see how disobedient he was. Ranboo always wore gloves.

Dream punished him every Friday.

His hands were always bruised because of it. Every week he’d return to Dream and the man would take time out of his day to fix Ranboo. He’d have Ranboo kneel on the ground, of course he would he couldn’t look down on Dream, it’d be disrespectful. 20 hits to his knuckles, 20 to his palm. He’d get more if he was bad that week. Dream insisted it was necessary. Even if he had done good that week, it reminded him of the rules. It reminded him of his place, it reminded him to be obedient. This started when he was 6.

He knew Dream’s punishments were normal. He read about them in the books Dream gave him. He had a lot of big chapter books. He’d read each one a handful of times, his favorite ones nearly a dozen. He didn’t have much else to do, especially when he couldn’t read.

So Ranboo loved his dad. Dream was very kind and loving. Sure, he got punished a lot and cried himself to sleep sometimes but it was normal. Dream said so. The marks on his hands were common among children. Dream *rarely* hit him anywhere else, so it was fine . *Sure his shoulders were bruised from Dream’s tight grip and his knees were bruised from being forced to kneel but that was different.*

So here he was now. Dream was mad at him, understandable really. He was late to get him out of the dungeon. “What took you so long?” His tail flicked back and forth nervously. He

wasn't even told about Dream's capture until yesterday, and then he had to get Bad's permission to teleport him out. That's what happened, but those were excuses. Dream didn't like excuses.

"I'm sorry sir" he lowered his head. Dream scoffed "Get the stick Ranboo." He commanded. The hybrid's tail wrapped around himself. Dream always made him go get it, and always punished him more when it took too long. He turned and went to the usually spot it laid. Except it wasn't there.

Panic swelled in his chest. It wasn't where it was meant to be. Dream was already upset with him and now he was going to be even angrier? "I don't-" he muttered. His head snapping around as he looked throughout the room desperately "no- no no it has to.. where.. has to" he kept mumbling to himself quietly.

"Ranboo" Dream called. He was in the doorway now. Ranboo's teary eyes looked up at him. "I'm- I'm sorry I can't" he started. Dream held up a hand which silenced him. "Find it" he glared at Ranboo. "Every second it takes will be another hit, I'm not in the mood for you avoiding punishment" The hybrid's ears pressed against the side of his head.

It took him 45 panicked seconds to find it.

He sat kneeling in front of Dream, holding his hands out. They were bruised and red. The last hit came down across his palms and he flinched slightly. He didn't make a sound, for that would only lead to *more* punishment. Dream set the ruler aside and ran a hand through his blonde hair. "You know I hate doing this." He looked down at Ranboo.

The hybrid nodded and kept his head down. Dream punished him because he was bad, if he wasn't bad this wouldn't happen. They could be happy together but Ranboo always ruined it. "I'm sorry sir" he apologized again. Dream hummed in acknowledgment and turned to his desk. The second part of his punishment, the books. Dream would have him continue in this position and hold books. Supporting the constant weight usually hurt, and made his arms sore, but that was fine. It was supposed to hurt. It was a punishment.

It was all to make him better. A better son, a better prince. Being Dream's adopted son, in a way, didn't automatically make him a prince. Dream said he needed to learn to be a prince. Dream was happy to teach him.

"You're a very disobedient child Ranboo. Your hands are always bruised" Dream started to lecture as he set the books down in his extended hands. He didn't point out the fact that even if he was good, never got an extra punishment, that his hands would be bruised from Friday anyways. "I've done so much for you." Dream set the book down and rubbed at the bruise on his jaw. Guilt hit Ranboo. He got hurt in the dungeon because he wasn't there for him. If he was better..

"Maybe I should have let you die" Dream muttered as he looked away. Ranboo jolted. He didn't mean that, Dream loved him. "I'm sorry" he said again. Dream looked back down at him. "You always say that don't you?"

Dream ran a hand down his face. “I have so much shit to do” he muttered into his hand. “I can’t even stay here.. once they realize I’m gone” he looked back at Ranboo. “Stay here. Don’t fucking move until I return or I swear” he didn’t need to finish the threat, Ranboo got the message. He nodded. The door slammed closed and Ranboo was left alone with his thoughts.

A good dad

Chapter Summary

This chapter was from the discord. Most of Ranboo's lines and thoughts are from Lius_Ennui and the crowd's yelling are from ClaireOhYutaYong

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This is just a bit more angst and background on him for y'all

Ranboo wasn't allowed to go to Manberg anymore. Dream said he had to stay in the quarters again, he was forbidden from leaving. That was both disappointing and relieving. On the one hand, he always felt trapped when he was stuck here. On the other hand, going into town always made him nervous. Manberg made him nervous too, but it was better. Kinder. They were more accepting of hybrids. Dream's kingdom wasn't. He remembers his first time entering the kingdom vividly.

One would think that Ranboo should have learned his lesson last year. Last year when he had snuck out to the kitchen, he was punished brutally and the scars on his palms from that day were still there. But teenagers are curious souls, so when he heard about a event in town, he had asked his Papa to go.

"No." He had said and it made his heart heavy. "Why?" Ranboo asked desperately, and the man simply gave his cheek a pat. "Because Ranboo, they'll scorn you down there. You're a hybrid" Dream sighed. It seemed no matter how many times they had this conversation it was never enough. "But Papa could come too!" The boy tried to reason. Dream would protect him. "No Ranboo, that's final."

So the hybrid took it into his own hands. Dream told him all about the way the townspeople hated hybrids, but he thought that maybe this will be different because this was an event. That maybe the people would be more welcoming. That maybe not all the townsfolk were rude. The teenager wanted to believe it. So that's why Ranboo stood outside in the gates of the castle, legs a bit shaky.

Ranboo's tail swished behind him nervously, he was standing outside the castle. He had walked down the steps and slipped through an opening in the gates and now was standing awkwardly. "What should..l...where should I go?" He mumbled to himself. So far none of the towns people noticed the tall but young looking enderman hybrid.

The town was decorated in blues, reds and other bright colors for event. It looked so pretty! The young hybrid had never seen anything like it before. It was way prettier here than it was

from his view in the castle. He sniffed, his nose filling with delicious food. Maybe he should try that!

So he slowly, but awkwardly walked towards one of the stands, his hands fidgeting nervously. The stand was run by a short woman, so he had to crouch to talk to her. "Hello..." He smiled, waving nervously. His tail on the ground.

The short woman looked up at him. The first thing she noticed was the fact he was an enderman hybrid. She subconsciously put her hand over her money pouch, to keep him from stealing it, but she forced a smile regardless. "Can I help you boy?"

"Uhhh..." The child hummed. "What is it?" He pointed towards the pork. Head tilting while his fingers dry washed his hands. A nervous fidget he could never quite quite. The woman sneered slightly "are you dumb?" She picked up the meat "it's pork" She pulled it away from the boy behind the counter "do you even have money?"

The boy flinched from his spot, tail starting to swish nervously at the phrase *are you stupid?* "I..." He didn't, Dream never let him had money. He had no reason to have it up in the castle. His ears lowered. "No, sorry sorry." He started to play with his tie. "Didn't know you needed it..."

"Then what are you doing here?" She waved her spoon out to force him to move back "Stupid child, you need money for things. You can't expect people to give things to you. Young people are so entitled. Now fuckin scram"

The boy whimpered, and quickly walked away. Yeah...okay...maybe Papa was right about some of it, but he wasn't entitled. Did he get things often? I mean, I guess he did, Dream gave him a lot of things. Books, games, anything within reason he asked for if he had been good.

Something caught his eye. It was a man baking in front of people. The child gasped in excitement, and was quick to walk towards it. The baker noticed the out of place boy instantly. His skin and hair were split down the middle and his eyes were different colors. Hybrids in general were a rare sight wandering the streets, alone anyways, this boy was even stranger than usual.

The child watched intently, Dream always said baking wasn't...wasn't what boys did. But he saw men doing it a lot it. He didn't know what this man was making but he watched in the back of the crowd. It smelled and looked good. The baker locks eyes with the curious boy. He was tall, but watched him work like a young toddler. He let a kind smile slip into his face and he waved his hand slightly to beckon the boy over.

Ranboo's eyes widened, gasping lightly at the hand before he waved back excitedly. The man frowned and tilted his head when the boy waved back. He opted to point at the boy and then next to him hoping he would get the message. He wanted the hybrid to come over.

The child tilted his head for a moment before he thought, tail twitching in anticipation before he started to walk towards him. Ranboo wanted to say hi. The baker watched the boy walk over. Before he could make it, another boy stepped on his tail.

The hybrid child was quick to flinch and turned his head, ears down and his eyes big. Ow...that hurt a lot. He looked at the boy who did it, older than him probably but Ranboo was taller. Ranboo's eyes held confusion. That was rude. Probably an accident, but the other boy didn't attempt to apologize.

"Watch where you're walking freak" the older boy shoved him back. He was muscular and had messy blonde hair. Ranboo flinched at that, and started to fidget with his hands. "I'm sorry I- I'm sorry." He apologized, looking down nervously. He was so enamored by the baker he wasn't paying attention.

The kid jammed his finger into Ranboo's chest "Why do you look like that? Your eyes are weird" Ranboo whimpered, slouching, "I...I don't.." Ranboo knew, he knew why but didn't want to say. "I-" His human eyes examined Ranboo head to toe again. The older boy shoved him into the mud "are you one of those hybrid things my momma talks about?"

Ranboo gave a small yelp, his back hitting the ground. Some sticky substance *that he didn't like, not at all* coated his scales and his suit. His suit that papa didn't like him to dirty. "You're so tall" he mused "but I bet I'm older! You really are a freak."

Ranboo was quick to cover his ears, even if it meant to spread the brown. The cruel words getting to him. He hated being different. Normal, he wanted to be normal. That's what papa wanted. A *normal* son. "I'm sorry I'm sorry." He didn't know what he was apologizing for, he was on autopilot. "I'm sorry."

The boy frowned staring down at the shaking and apologizing hybrid "why do you keep saying that" he took a step back "you're so weird" The hybrid whimpered, and looked up at the boy. That's when he saw his opportunity to run, so he took it. The human boy huffed "Yeah run away you freak" and threw a handful of mud at the retreating hybrid

Ranboo whimpered, trying to shake the substance off his scales. He was dirty, shaking, and scared. Why did he leave? He wanted to go home. Home. He had to go home. The child had his eyes closed, he didn't know where he was going exactly, but he suddenly bumped into something hard and fell. He grunted at the impact.

The guard looked down at the muddy child that ran into him. Because of how dirty he was, he almost didn't realize it was a hybrid. His hand landed on the hilt of his sword. The guard grabbed the boy's upper arm. "What are you doing here hybrid?" He growled.

"What the-" Another guard said, walking over. "How the fuck did it get in here?" Ranboo winced, and looked at the guard that held his arm, eyes widening. "I-" He tried. "I didn't.." The guard yanked on his ear to examine his face Ranboo yelped, one of his eyes closed and his ear tried to flick out of his hold. "Please..." he begged. He didn't like being touched.

"Hey let's not do it here, we gotta move it to the stand." The man with blonde hair smirked. The stand, public humiliation for hybrids. Dream thought hybrids were ugly mistakes, having them wander the streets would make the kingdom "ugly". So he implemented the stand. A deterrent, to keep hybrids hidden especially during events like this.

“I’ve never seen one of these freaks look so weird” he started pulling the child “at least they usually look somewhat human” They pulled the child up to the stand. Ranboo whimpered, not bothering to fight back. Fighting back always made it worse with papa. “Please, please...” He begged, it was low and probably inaudible. He didn’t mean to be somewhere he wasn’t supposed to. He wanted to go home.

One of the guards, the one with blonde hair, grabbed a metal collar and handed it to the other. The other guard quickly secured the collar around the boy’s neck, ignoring the pathetic pleas. Ranboo was helpless. Feeling the heavy metal in his neck made him tense up, oh, oh, no no no. He stood in fear, eyes wide.

“Ladies and gentlemen!” The blonde guard said. “Look at this fine specimen we have here! Come and watch!” A crowd gathered around and upon seeing the hybrid a few people started shouting

“freak” “teach it a lesson” “hybrid”

Ranboo was suddenly pushed into the ground, his already bruised knees hit the ground. He was used to it though. “What should we do?” The guard asked the crowd, and grabbed the chain from the other man. “It’s a enderman hybrid” one of the guards mused “don’t those things burn in water?”

“Oh they do!” The man quickly grabbed a bucket of water and handed it too the other man. “If it doesn’t do what people ask, slash the freak.” The crowd cheered upon seeing the bucket. “You got it” he chuckled holding the bucket

“Oh, oh! Tell it to bark like a dog!” The lady that was at the pork shop asked. A cruel smile now adorning her face. When Ranboo went to her shop she was scared he’d steal, but now she happily abandoned her stand alone to watch the show. One of the guards kicked Ranboo in the gut “you heard her mutt, bark”

Ranboo’s ears pressed down, what...he...The boy whimpered, feeling embarrassed and-

He felt a kick to his gut, the boy yelped, and whimpered. Maybe it was best if he just listened. “B-Bark? Bark.” He tried, he didn’t know what dogs sounded like. The guard holding the water splashed a bit on him.

Ranboo held back a scream, his eyes becoming watery. Frustrated tears threatened to fall He didn’t...he...he didn’t know what a bark was. “Bark? B-Bark?” The crowd booed

The scene happened a few more times, him trying to ‘bark’ with water being splashed in him. He didn’t know what he was doing wrong. He said bark. Then, an old man yelled out, “It’s probably mentally stupid!” He suggested.

The guard looked at his counterpart.

“Fucking hybrid trash!” A voice yelled. The guard kicked the boy in the head “So its hideous and stupid” Ranboo finally let a scream out. “I’m sorry! I’m s-sorry! Dunno what a-a b-bark is!” He cried, and the blonde knelt down and gripped the boy by his hair. “Fuckin stupid.” He

groaned. “Then repeat after me, *ruff ruff*.” The guard holding the bucket stepped on his tail “say it bitch”

“Come on little puppy!” A voice in the crowd called out. Ranboo stiffened, his eyes looking at the guards, then at the crowd. He then looked at the water bucket and made a small “Ruff.” He whimpered. “Ruff, Ruff, ruff” his face had heated slightly. He wanted to go home.

The crowd cheered. The guard then let go of his hair and gave the man the chain and he grabbed the bucket, “I’m not going to have enough patience for this, switch with me.” Ranboo whimpered, and barked a few more times before he was told to stop. His ears lowered. He wanted Dream...he wanted his Papa, he was right! The town people weren’t nice.

“Splash him!” “Train it! Make it sit and stay and talk!”

“Sit hybrid” one of the guards commanded. The boy was quick to sit. Ears lowered as tears started to go down his face. He didn’t dare look up at the guards. “Teach the bitch a lesson!” A young woman yelled. The crowd jeered in agreement.

“It’s already trained” one of the guards chuckled. He grabbed the hybrid’s ear and turned his head towards him “you got a owner already freak? Where are they? I’m sure they’d love to see this.” He mocked. Ranboo whimpered, eyes shutting close. He...no he didn’t. He had a Papa though. He shook his head and looked back up at the guard. Lying would do no good. “N-No Sir..Only a P-Papa.”

“Your *papa* must be an idiot to keep a son like you. I’d have drowned my son if he ended up so ugly” if only he knew he was insulting the king. Ranboo flinched at the words. Papa said his parents, his birth ones, tried to kill him “Awww it has a papa! Isn’t that cute!” A woman yelled before throwing an apple at him, hitting his arms

Ranboo couldn’t help but whimper at what the man said. “N-No, Papa isn’t s-stupid.” He protested, his eyes widening suddenly at the feeling of a new touch. He tried to pull away but the grip on his ears hurt too much. “Is it a papa or are they your owner is the question.” The other guard said, smirking. “I vote for the latter.”

“It’s real disrespectful to call an owner your papa.” The guard slammed his foot into Ranboo’s back “what would he think seeing you like this?” Ranboo gave a small yell, it became more pained when he felt water splashed onto him. “N-No! He l-lets me! Promise p-promise!” He begged, doubling over at the pain in his back. Well.. that was half true. His papa sometimes got upset when Ranboo called him papa but usually it was okay.

“LIAR!” “Make it beg for mercy!” “Beat it!” “TEACH HIM A LESSON!”

The guard kicked him with each word “didn’t your owner teach you not to lie freak?” The boy yelped. “H-He lets me call him s-sir or p-papa! Promise!” He cried and tried again, trying to back away but the guard grabbed the chain in his collar to keep him in place. “I’m not lying! I s-swear.” Stop, he wanted it to stop. He wouldn’t lie, lying was bad. Papa said so.

“Stop lying!” The guard landed a solid kick to his head “hybrids shouldn’t lie, know you’re place”

“Liar!” “Kill him!” “Punish him!”

“No no please! Sir. Sir. Sir! I’m sorry!” He cried, covering his ears. “I’m sorry! I’m sorry! I didn’t mean too! Papa! Papa. I’m sorry! I’m sorry, I’m sorry!” The child began to break, crying and sobbing as he begged. “I didn’t know! I’m sorry!”

“Splash him again!”

The guards laugh “does your owner beat you like this?” More water was splashed “its deserved, but obviously he doesn’t do it well enough you disobedient brat”

“Kill him!” “Make him pay!” “Kill him!”

Dream stepped out of the shadows. “That’s enough” his voice was loud and commanding, recognizable over the chaos. Every citizen knew who he was immediately. Ranboo had curled up in a ball, his ears twitching when he heard that voice. He stilled.. he didn’t dare look up.

The guards froze. “Y-Your majesty?” They were shocked, Dream never interfered. He was the one who put the stand in place. The king crossed to the stand, the crowd parted as he walked. His mask was covering his face.

“What are...you...” The blonde guard questioned. Ranboo was trembling, mumbling out apologies and crying for his Papa... not just for his Papa but for his *Papa not to hurt him*. Dream ignored the guard “Ranboo.” His mask tilted down as he looked at the boy. His tone was monotone, so his emotion was impossible to decipher.

The boy instantly looked up, a bit shakily but he looked up. He always looked up when papa prompted him to. Relief but also fear settled inside his gut when he saw the mask. Dream looked up at the guard “unchain him” he growled, his fingers curled into tight fists.

Ranboo flinched at the tone even though it wasn’t directed at him. “Yes sir.” The blonde was quick to unscramble the key from the other guard, putting the bucket down and shakily kneeling to unto the chain. Dream glanced at the crowd, who’s murmuring silenced immediately, before looking back down at Ranboo.

“Im sorry. I’m sorry. Just wanted- I’m sorry.” He whimpered, not daring to move. Dream nearly rolled his eyes at Ranboo’s apologies “Come here” Dream opened his arms slightly motioning for Ranboo to hug him. The boy was quick to crawl towards the man and throw himself at him. He forgot the crowd and the guards, the only thing he focused on was Dream. “Papa, papa, papa, papa, papa...” The boy cried, putting his arms around Dream’s waist as he buried his face in his stomach. He found safety in it. Safety he had nearly begged for after what felt like hours of torment.

The guards watched, shocked, the crowd froze and silenced at the action. The king never let peasants touch him, certainly not *hybrids*. He also wasn't a dad. Was he? Dream was quick to hug him back "you're okay, it's over" he promised and ran his fingers through the boy's hair. He let Ranboo cry a moment before looking at the blonde guard dead in the eyes. "Don't touch my property ever again"

The blonde flinched back before he looked at the boy and then back at Dream. "Y-Yes sir." He said. Ranboo hugged him harder. Dream was right, he always was...he was right, he was. Papa was never wrong. The boy tilted his head towards the hand in his hair, taking any contact he could get.

Dream looked at the guard who had held the bucket. "Execute him" he decided. Pouring water on Ranboo could scar him, he didn't want anyone to scar his child. Hitting and cursing at him was one thing, but permanent damage? Unacceptable. An example needed to be set.

Ranboo was babbling and wanted to be held, and hugged tightly. He still sobbed but the fact that his guardian was with him made him feel safer. The blonde's eyes widened. "Wait, Wait. Your Majesty everything I did was legal! I didn't even *know* that it was yours!"

Dream held him tighter and continued to pet his hair "did you really think some *peasant* would have a hybrid as rare as an enderman?" His tone was accusing. The blonde bit his lip. "I-" He looked at the boy. The suit was made of expensive materials. The hybrid wasn't dirty or starved...it looked well taken care of. More so than most hybrids were kept. "N-No but I mean anything is possible right?" He threw out his arms in desperation.

Dream sneered "Fine" his hand tightened around Ranboo's hair. The hold wasn't painful, but it wasn't as relaxed and comforting as before. "You can be taken to the palace and live the rest of your life like the hybrid's hmm? If *anything* is possible, maybe you'll even grow a tail."

Ranboo stiffened, his babbling stopped and he looked up at the masked man slightly. The guard groaned. "Never! I'll never be treated like those stupid pieces of shit!" He pointed to Ranboo. "It doesn't even know what the fuck a bark is!"

"Ranboo knows what I teach him and that is enough" he raised his hand up and motioned to the other guards "Execute him. I gave him a chance at mercy and he refused." A few guards had come from their stations due to the commotion and they nodded. Quickly, they grabbed the man by his arms and made him kneel. "Wait, Wait! I'm sorry! I didn't mean it like that!" He sounded desperate. A female guard unsheathed her sword.

Ranboo had kept his eye on Dream like a curious kitten. His eyes a bit lidded from being tired. Dream grabbed Ranboo's face gently and tilted it back into his stomach so his vision

was blocked completely before waving his hand in command for the guard to continue.

The boy let it happen and just nuzzled his face in the man's green hoodie. Yeah, Papa is safe. Ranboo drowned out the noise of curses and yelling, the sound of a scream and begging. The sound of crying and liquid falling on the ground.

"It's done sir." The woman said, putting her sword back into the hilt. Dream pet his hair once more before taking a small step back. He looked down at Ranboo and held his hand out for him to stand up, something he hadn't done since the boy was small.

Ranboo whimpered at the loss of contact before the child looked up Dream and his hand. Slowly, with shaky, bruised hands took it. The guards started to clean up the blood and body. Two guards standing in front of two others as they worked to shield the scene. The crowds watched fearfully. The audience was silent, only remote sound from them being breaths as they parted, and the cries of a few young children who didn't understand the situation but knew it was bad. Especially in contrast compared to how happy everyone was near minutes ago, yelling and cheering.

Ranboo was still crying, but he felt better and it didn't flow as fast. He followed without complaint, even if it was a little fast for his shaky, bruised legs. Dream led him all the way to his quarters silently. When they were alone he let go of Ranboo's hand and reached up to remove his mask.

The boy felt tense, his eyes on the floor and lowered his ears. He was all dirty, and wet, and it didn't feel good at all. But the worst feeling he felt was when his parent was mad or disappointed at him. "I'm sorry..." He let out gently.

Dream removed the mask and looked up at Ranboo. The boy probably expected anger, or disappointment. That wasn't what he found. There were tears in the corners of Dream's eyes.

Ranboo's eyes widened at the look in Dream's eyes. He-He was crying! He didn't like that feeling either. He didn't, that fact that he was sad because of him. "Papa..." He whispered. Dream put his hand on the boy's shoulder and pushed him down slowly. He let the boy fall at his own pace so he didn't hurt his knees.

Ranboo went down, grunting a bit, it hurt, even at his own pace. He wanted to hug him...his Papa. He wanted to make him happy again. Dream crouched down and hugged Ranboo. His chin resting in Ranboo's hair as the boy's face was against his chest rather than his stomach like usual. "I was so scared when you weren't here Ranboo. You made Papa so scared."

Ranboo hugged him tight, he started to cry again silently. Dream never hugged him like this as much anymore. He tensed though when he spoke and bit his lip, "Didn't...Didn't mean t-to scare P-Papa.." he felt bad. "I told you not to leave again little ender and look what happened" Dream ran his fingers through Ranboo's hair.

Ranboo whimpered, and hugged tighter. "I-..." The boy nuzzled his face in his hoodie before he spoke. "I know...Papa was r-right..." he took a shaky breath in. The adrenaline fading. "It hurts..." He was referring to the burns on his skin.

“I’m always right” he hummed. What a perfect lesson this was. His hand tightened in Ranboo’s hair. “You killed that man Ranboo. If you hadn’t left, he would be alive” Ranboo was quick to look up at Dream. His lip trembling and his body shook. “I...I killed...” His tears started all over again. He buried his face in the man’s chest again, and whimpered.

“He was a father. You killed someone’s papa.” He started to run his fingers through his hair again. “But it’s okay, I forgive you” Ranboo flinched at that. He killed someone’s Papa...he killed someone’s Papa. “I’m sorry, I’m sorry.” He whimpered out. “Papa I didn’t mean too. Promise.”

“I know.” Dream stood “let’s get you cleaned up” he looked down at Ranboo’s dirty and disheveled state. The boy pouted, he didn’t get any ear scratches, but he didn’t question anything. “Y-Yes sir.” He slowly got up.

Dream led him to the bathroom where they washed his hair with a mix of soap and oil before letting Ranboo change his clothes. While the boy changed he went back into the bathroom and grabbed some medical supplies. He walked into the dining room and sat down waiting.

Ranboo got into a royal blue sweater and long black pants. His burns hurt, it wasn’t as bad at the stick, but, it still hurt. That’s when it dawned on him...would...would Dream punish him? He whimpered fearfully. He deserved it didn’t he? He disobeyed. But he already hurt.

Dream looked up when Ranboo came out of his room. He motioned for the hybrid to sit down on the chair in front of him. The boy slowly made his way and sat down, he started to tap his leg repetitively.

Dream started to work on Ranboo’s burns. “Thank you.” Ranboo whispered. He did so slowly and carefully. “Stop that” he hit the top of Ranboo’s knee after a few minutes before continuing to treat the burns. When Dream hit his knee, the boy flinched, and stopped. “Sorry,”

“You understand why you shouldn’t have left right?” He tilted Ranboo’s head up so he could stare at the boy directly when he finished. The started to dribble his knee lightly at that. “Mhm...I know Papa.” He looked at the man. “People d-don’t like me.” He was a hybrid. He was different *weird, freak, monster*. People didn’t like different. “That’s right” he pat the boy’s cheek. “People are cruel, but I love you”

Dream stood with the medical supplies and left the room again. The boy smiled at that, his tail wagging. “Lo’ve you.” He whispered back. Dream hadn’t said he loved him in a while. His knee stopped bouncing and he put his arms to his chest. He would hold onto the feeling for as long as he could.

Dream returned with the stick in his hand.

The boy flinched when he saw it. His ears lowered and the happy feeling he felt disintegrated. He whimpered, he opened his mouth to say something, but nothing came out.

Dream walked over and tilted his head up with the ruler “you’ve already been through a lot” he clicked his tongue “so how about only 5 and we say you’re forgiven alright?”

The boy was quick to nod at the offer, it was less than usual, barely any. “M-Mhm.” He said, hope in his eyes. “Okay.” Ranboo was quick to get out of the chair and kneel. Dream waited for the boy to kneel and hold out his hands before landing the first hit. At the first hit, he gave small yelp. Whether his slip up was from him already being in enough pain or just being tired, he wasn’t sure. He closed his mouth then and bit his tongue. He wasn’t supposed to make noise. Please don’t hear please don’t hear....

“We’ve talked about this.” Dream sighed. He gently pat the top of Ranboo’s head. “I’ll let it slide just this once.” He did the second and third hits. Ranboo bit his lip, his mind mentally was strained and tired so he tried not to make another noise.

After the fourth and fifth Dream realized how drowsy Ranboo really was. He picked the half asleep boy up and carried him. He passed Ranboo’s room and entered his own. After setting the boy down on his bed he went into his personal bathroom to change. Afterwards he got into the bed and let Ranboo curl against his chest.

“Papa.” The child mumbled, and buried his face in his chest. He was so tired. He was safe. Dream cared about him *actually*. He was only punished because he deserved it. Ranboo knew not to go out anymore. He was scared of the towns people... but it’s okay. Papa would protect him. He always has.

Ranboo slowly drifted off to sleep, purring. Dream pet Ranboo’s hair until he fell asleep. The king fell asleep not too long after. He’d never admit to the fact that was one of the best nights of sleep he’d had in a while.

Ranboo yawned when he woke up, realizing he wasn’t in his room. The boy gasped, he was in Dreams! He hasn’t been in it since he was young. His papa’s bed was bigger and softer than his own. He looked at the clock, 10:30. Woah...they slept in. Dream woke up when he felt Ranboo sit up next to him.

The boy felt happy! Dream was so kind yesterday and it made his heart happy. He made Dream cry too and was embarrassed... that wasn’t a good feeling but everything else was.

He turned his head to see Dream awake. “Mornin’ Papa.” He smiled wide. The king stared at him a moment. “Morning” Dream stretched his arms up. “You should leave now” Ranboo’s ears lowered. “O-Oh...” He said, and got off the bed. Then boy didn’t want his disappointment to show. He walked towards the door but before he left he turned and smiled. “Thank y-you. F-For everything.” He smiled.

“Mhm” Dream hummed. When Ranboo left he dragged his hand down his face and got up to get dressed for the day. He’d have to wash his sheets now.

Ranboo made his way to his room and bounced a little. He felt good. He went to go grab his clothes to get dressed for the day. He'd have to wash his other suit so he wore a spare. The boy then moved and set up the table for breakfast. Usually Dream did it because he was clumsy, but, he could handle it this time. He'd make up for Dream saving him.

Dream finished getting dressed and walked out of the room to head to the kitchen. He heard shuffling and clinking. The masked man couldn't conceal his growl. Great, Ranboo was going to be disobedient for a few days. He always took a mile when given an inch. Maybe Dream should have given the hybrid more than five. He entered the kitchen room/dining room area.

Ranboo's ears lowered when he heard the growl, tail wagging nervously. The table wasn't set up *perfectly* but it was he could do. Some of the things he needed Dream had specifically told him he couldn't touch.

"I'll make breakfast just- sit down" his tone had an edge. He turned to the fridge and grabbed some eggs. The boy's ears lay flat in his head. He nodded. "Yes Sir." Was all he said as he sat down. Was Papa okay? He was much more kind yesterday. Maybe Ranboo passed the line and crossed boundaries... he just wanted to help.

Dream made the food in silence. The memory's from yesterday shifted in his head slightly, they became distorted. He felt angry. After finishing the eggs he walked over and separated it onto the plates. His grip on the dishes and utensils was tight. The hybrid boy didn't notice, he was too hungry.

Ranboo's tail wagged a bit in anticipation as he smelled the eggs. So good. Dream started to eat as he glared down at his food. The silence continued. "Papa." Ranboo said, feeling awkward slightly. "How'd you know I was in town?"

Dream looked up at him "I didn't say you could speak" Ranboo winced. That was true. Of course he messed up *again*. "But since you asked, I realized you were gone and I looked around. You caused quite the scene, it was easy to see."

Ranboo flinched, nodding before he began to eat a bit more fearfully. His ears lowered and he thought.. he really did cause a scene. "It was embarrassing you know. You're supposed to be acting like a prince. That's what you want right?" He set his fork down. Ranboo cringed, he nodded, he very much wanted that. But being a prince also means exploration...but...Dream was right. He disobeyed and it was embarrassing.

"You ruined the festival for a lot of people" he rested his head on his chin leaning forward. He smiled, just a bit, watching guilt fester in the boy's mind.

Ranboo remembered when he heard the man's head get cut off. He subconsciously put his hand on his throat and gulped. He..he didn't mean to. "I'm sorry! Didn't mean too." He was quick to try and apologize. Dream capitalized on his guilt and fear. "This is why you need to listen to me, right Ranboo?"

Ranboo looked down. “Y-Yes sir. Of course s-sir.” He bit his lip. “Sorry for not doing it yesterday.” Dream stood. His meal was half completed and he walked to stand next to Ranboo. He grabbed the boy’s chin and made him look up “promise me you won’t try to leave again”

Ranboo nodded vigorously. The two times he left had now both ended badly. “Y-Yes Papa, Sir. I promise. Promise.” The kingdom smiled. “Good” he let his hand fall back to his side “because next time I won’t save you”

The boy tensed and shook at that. “Y-Yes Sir...” Panic spread through him when Dream went to leave. He wanted him to stay. Maybe it was selfish but he wanted his affection. Ranboo was quick to hold Dream’s hand. “Papa. I love you.” He whimpered out.

Dream tore his hand away from Ranboo’s grip. He sneered in disgust and backhanded the child out of his chair. “What did I say about touching me without my permission?” He took a few heavy steps so he loomed over the boy “and stop fucking calling me that. It was embarrassing when you did it in front of everyone. *‘Papa’ ‘Papa’* you’re so fucking pathetic”

Ranboo was quick to hold onto his face and absolutely *shake* as Dream scolded him. “I’m sorry, I’m sorry.” He tried, “I’m sorry Pa-I’m sorry sir.” He begged. “Didn’t think. Am stupid, didn’t..” He closed his eyes and cowered away. “I’ll be better,”

“You are stupid. Absolutely *stupid* and *worthless*. I don’t know how I ended up with a child like you.” Dream growled. “Maybe I should give you back to the citizens” He yanked Ranboo up by his hair. The hybrid boy felt a bit betrayed, *angry* maybe? He didn’t know. Papa was supposed to protect him. Ranboo was quick to shake his head. “No no! I-“ He bit his lip. “Please don’t. P-Please. I’m sorry, I’m sorry for y-yesterday. Wont ever d-do it again. Give me a second chance? P-Please Pa- sir.”

Dream dropped him to the floor “fine” he took a step back “you should be grateful, for this and everything else I’ve done for you” Ranboo thought for a moment, before he nodded and kneeled, bowed his head. “Yes, I am. I-I’m sorry f-for being a disappointment.” Dream was good, a very good dad. He saved Ranboo. He should be grateful. He should be a better son.

Dream turned and walked to the door. “You should be.” He opened it and slammed it shut. The locks clicked into place. His half eaten breakfast still sat abandoned on the table. The guards all turned their heads down as he walked by. He was angry, very angry.

It had taken everything in him not to start beating Ranboo. He didn’t want to hurt the boy, punishment was different, but he’d never hurt him unless necessary. Ranboo was his son, not his pet. He needed a firm hand sometimes, to guide him in the right direction, but Dream still *loved* him. He was a good dad. But he was angry. He needed an outlet for his anger. He threw on his coat and started to set foot to the cabin.

Seashells

Chapter Summary

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Tommy and Tubbo were out together with just their dads for once. It was rare for the four of them to be alone together. They were out on the beach, Phil and Schlatt talking to each other farther inland while Tommy and Tubbo stood closer to the shore making a sand castle.

They decided to go to the beach after realizing the boys had never been. They'd only read about it in books. Wilbur and Techno insisted Phil take Tommy because the king hadn't had much bonding with him yet. They'd gotten him back a second time and, while Phil spent a lot of time with him, much of it was in the silent walls of the infirmary. The twins wanted Phil and Tommy to have the same bond they had with their dad.

Schlatt, of course, went along with Tubbo. The boy who had just started to speak again. He'd been excited, going on mini and quiet rants about the beach all week when he and Schlatt were alone in his office while Schlatt worked. He knew a lot about the beaches, despite the fact he's never been. Tubbo said he read about them. The President was glad the beach had gotten Tubbo to talk more. When they finally arrived the boys peeled themselves away from their father's sides and were attached at the hip roaming the beach for the first half an hour before settling down in the "perfect" place by the shore. Tommy insured it was perfect anyways.

Phil and Schlatt decided to let them have their own time for a while. The two sat on towels, Schlatt made sure to glance at Tubbo every few minutes while Phil was a little more laid back. Further up on the beach Tubbo was now making a sand castle while Tommy gathered up sea shells. Every few minutes Tommy would bring his new collection over to Tubbo and they'd decorate the sand structure together.

Tommy picked up a rather pretty yellow seashell and brought it over to Tubbo immediately. "Here" he pushed the shell into Tubbo's hands. The boy's eyes widened as he looked it over. This was the first yellow shell, the rest had been white or tan. Tubbo jumped to his feet and hugged the older teen around the waist "Thanks Tommy"

Tommy's arms were raised up awkwardly a moment before he pat Tubbo's back a few times. "Yeah yeah no problem big man" he grabbed Tubbo's arms "now get off me you clingy bitch." The ram hybrid laughed and let go after a moment. He looked down at the shell again and slipped it into his pocket before returning to his castle. Tommy looked down at him and rolled his eyes dramatically. *No, Tubbo hugging him and saying thanks didn't make him feel happy.* He went to see if he could find any more yellow seashells.

After another hour Tubbo stood and made his way back over to the adults. “Dad” he crouched down and poked Schlatt’s horn. The President had been holding his arm over his eyes as he laid on the towel. He moved his arm down looking up at Tubbo. “Yes?” He couldn’t help but smile slightly at the excitement and pride that shined in Tubbo’s eyes. He looked like a kid again.

“Come look at my sand castle” he grabbed Schlatt’s hand and pulled it slightly in the direction of the shore. Schlatt grumbled a “fine” and stood. “I’m an old man you know Tubbo, I need a five minute early warning before you make me stand up.” Tubbo laughed and knocked his horn into Schlatt’s side. He reached his hand up and ruffled Tubbo’s hair as they walked.

The President let Tubbo lead him to the sand castle and show it to him. He listened as Tubbo rambled about the sand castle and the seashells all while grinning. His voice was above a whisper. This was the most Tubbo had spoken he realized. It was a good day.

Tubbo had good days and bad days. On the good days he’d talk to Schlatt unprompted and he’d ramble a bit about bees. On the bad days Tubbo wouldn’t make a sound. Schlatt was glad, it seemed the amount of bad days was lessening. He hadn’t had one all week.

When Phil suggested taking them to the beach, he was actually hesitant and unsure if it would make Tubbo’s mental condition worse. He worries were proven wrong, of course. It seemed like the beach was very beneficial for Tubbo. He thought about it more as he now sat making his sand castle bigger with his son. Maybe he should take Tubbo to another place with Quackity sometime soon.

Tommy appeared behind them with another handful of shells. “How come you let him help?” He pouted. Tubbo jumped and looked up at Tommy. Something flashed through his facial features, just barely for a moment, before he smiled and pulled Tommy to sit with them. “I didn’t know you wanted to help Toms, you could have asked”

Schlatt looked a bit more worried than before as he stared at Tubbo. Feeling uneasy the President stood up. “I’m going to go back over to Phil for a while.” He took a moment to ruffle Tubbo’s fluffy hair one more time before walking back to Phil.

Schlatt knew, logically, he should be grateful with how far Tubbo has come. His son was talking now, that was a big improvement. Still, he just wanted to do more. He felt like he wasn’t doing enough. Tubbo still had nightmares he couldn’t prevent and he still flinched away from Schlatt on really bad days.

“How are they?” Phil asked when he reached the king's side. “Good, they’re happy. Built a sand castle” he sat down next to Phil. The other man hummed. Phil looked down at them. He couldn’t see the sand castle in detail, they were too far away, but he could tell they were having fun.

“When should we tell them?” He looked back over at Schlatt. The man’s expression hardened. “We *aren’t* telling them.”

Phil shifted and looked back at the boys. “They deserve to know” The president scoffed. He didn’t want Tubbo to know. He was still healing, he didn’t need it ruined by this. “I don’t want Tubbo to know” Phil turned fully to him now and gestured to them with his hand. “But they should know. Both of them should-“ Schlatt stood “No”

A moment of silence passed between them. The two rulers stared at each other intently. “You don’t get to make decisions for my son,” Schlatt growled. He couldn’t believe this. Tubbo knowing would make him panicked and afraid. Phil, in all of his wisdom, should be able to see it as a terrible decision.

“Schlatt” Phil stood and held his hands up. “I know it’s scary but they deserve it. I know you’re just trying to protect Tubbo but..” The president looked back over at Tubbo. He smiled was wide and his ears flicked happily.

“Maybe” he wanted to protect Tubbo from every bad thing in the world, but he knew that was just simply impossible. Tubbo had been sheltered enough his whole life. He’d had too many important decisions made for himself by other people. Tubbo looked over at him and waved. Schlatt waved back, his other hand curled into a fist where his fingernails were digging into his palm.

He wanted to shield Tubbo from the world, but that’s not how life works.

Dream stood in front of the portal. He had gotten the final pearl, and with the last few feathers he had from that brat he was able to complete the portal. He *should* be going to the end right now. He should have the portal open and his plan would have started. The only problem was he forgot the incantation.

He knew it by heart once. Him, Sapnap, and George could all say it together in perfect harmony. After locking up the egg and those monsters, he no longer had the need to know it. Over the years he eventually forgot it.

He remembers the first time they opened it. Each spared some feathers to change the orbs. They needed less feathers then the amount of Tommy’s Dream needed because their feathers were purer. That’s why it took so long to complete the portal. Dream had put off the incantation, assuming he’d have enough time.

Sapnap had been the one to find the portal. After dropping the egg and forcing their corrupted brethren to follow they closed the portal and removed the pearls. George and Sapnap had taken them when they left Dream. He didn’t need them anyways.

Dream made his way back to his castle with his cloak over his head and an invisibility potion in hand. He was mostly safe in his kingdom, especially now that the bird had already searched it, but he still remained cautious.

He met with Bad on his way to his quarters. The demon told him about recent events and Dream updated him on the portal situation. Dream held the incantation book to his chest as he unlocked the door. When he entered he saw Ranboo sitting on the couch reading one of his chapter books.

The boy looked at him nervously a moment. Ranboo had been much more subdued recently. Dream wasn't going to complain, he was sick of disobedient children. "Come here Ranboo" he stood and waited for the boy.

Ranboo set the book down and made his way over to Dream. His head was down and he stood in front of Dream. The man in the green hoodie raised an unimpressed eyebrow and Ranboo sunk to his knees so Dream could look down on him. For Dream it was about power, looking down at Ranboo and Tubbo made him feel powerful again, Ranboo was told it was just out of respect.

"I want you to try to translate this" he held the book out to Ranboo. The boy flinched slightly and took the book into his hands looking down at it. He knew Ranboo knew some of the language. He was an enderman hybrid, it was natural for him, he also gave the boy a few books that had bits in the language.

"Okay Papa" he flipped through a few pages of the book. Dream patted the boy's head and looked down at his bruised hands. There was a small smile on his face. "You've been really good this week Ranboo"

He hybrid looked up at him with wide eyes. It was true. He had been really good. That could be because Dream had gotten angry and hit him every day so far, leaving the boy more shaky and subdued then before, but that's besides the point. He took his time ruffling the boy's hair.

Ranboo was starved of affection, especially recently. Dream knew this. Too much and Dream would lose his edge over the boy. Still, he kind of liked the way Ranboo leaned into his hand. The way he depended on Dream for affection. He was like a wilting flower, every once in a while Dream spared him a few drops of water. Just enough to keep him alive.

"You can do that for me can't you?" He pulled his hand away. Ranboo frowned slightly at the loss of contact but he nodded. Dream smiled "Good, I'll be back tomorrow" he turned on his heels and left. Inside the room Ranboo looked down at the book and opened to the marked page. His ears lowered. He had no idea what any of it said.

Secrets Revealed

It was a peaceful afternoon. “Hey babe” Schlatt looked over to his fiancé who was currently standing on the other side of the kitchen cooking soup. The spoon mixing lazily around the heated ingredients as the pleasant smell rose in puffs of steam filling the kitchen. Quackity wore a pink apron over his usual blue shirt as he mumbled to himself in Spanish while reading the recipe. The way his nose wrinkled and he cursed the recipe book he thought was steering him wrong was adorable to Schlatt. Upon being addressed the duck hybrid glanced at him a moment “hmm?”

“I was thinking” the President nervously moved his ring around his index finger. An idea had worked its way into his brain the other night and he had debated it for a while. Mulling it over during the boring meetings he never really paid much attention to anyways. Truthfully though, he felt a little bad for what he was going to request. It wasn’t bad per say, but it was definitely a big favor to ask of the other man.

Quackity raised an eyebrow at his uncharacteristic hesitance. “Our honeymoon” he started. That was the subject of his question. The couple had decided where they would go when they first became engaged over a year ago. It was something both of them looked forward to. “I know it’s supposed to be a couples thing, but, I want to bring Tubbo with us”

They were going somewhere similar to the beach that Phil and him had taken the boys to. He remembers the warm feeling that watching Tubbo play in the sand gave his heart. Almost making up for the lack of moments he got to spend in Tubbo’s growing up years. The older ram hybrid wanted to replicate it again. “I think he’d really enjoy it. Also I don’t want to leave him alone. Even if he went with Phil..” he trailed off. Quackity looked at him sympathetically. The threat of Dream still hung over them.

Quackity paused a moment before laughing. Schlatt tilted his head “of course he can come mi amor” the Vice President threw and arm up as he spoke “you really worried me so much over a simple question. Why would I say no?”

Schlatt’s shoulders dropped a bit in relief. Truth be told he wasn’t exactly sure why he thought Quackity would say no. He knew his fiancé loved Tubbo but he wasn’t sure if he’d want the boy to go. There was no denying Schlatt had spent less time with Quackity and opted to spend more time with Tubbo. The attention he used to completely devote to the duck hybrid now split between him and his son. It would be understandable if Quackity wanted a bit to themselves. “I don’t know” he admitted. His fear was a tad irrational but he couldn’t help it

“Hey” Quackity said as he abandoned the now finished pot at the stove to walk to his fiancé. The duck hybrid took Schlatt’s hand, his finger brushing against the band that physically symbolized their partnership. “We can take Tubbo anywhere if it makes him feel safe and it eases your nerves.” His usually lightheartedness shifting into a serious tone. Schlatt looked at him gratefully.

Light footsteps approached. They both looked up to see Tubbo walk into the room. There was a bounce in his step and a smile on his face. The slightly somber mood instantly brightened. “Hi kiddo” Schlatt turned his body to Tubbo just as the smaller ram made it to his side. The boy pushed forward and hugged Schlatt, he didn’t look for permission as he buried his face into his father’s chest. Schlatt noticed the straight forward nature of the hug, the lack of looking for permission not because he minded, but because it was rare for Tubbo. He ruffled the boy’s hair. More progress was good.

“Just in time little bee!” Quackity announced happily as he turned and returned to the stove. “I finished dinner” he made a show of dramatically getting bowls and serving the food. Tubbo tilted his head to watch Quackity and giggled. The happy sound was music to Schlatt’s ears. He tightened the hug for a moment before letting go and standing up.

They each and got their respective bowls before settling down together at the table. It was very talkative and Schlatt couldn’t be happier. Upon Tubbo’s second return they’d spent many meals silent together. Even Schlatt, who usually spoke proud with a loud voice that brought attention to him every time he opened his mouth, had quieted.

He’d gotten used to the simple moments filled with silence. Showing love without noise was easy. He didn’t need it. Still, he had missed speaking to his son. So the President was very welcoming to Tubbo’s newfound voice. His ability to speak returned steadily. He had been very worried for Tubbo at first. There’s a difference between being soft spoken and quite. There’s a difference between choosing your words carefully and being too scared to speak. Even Tubbo, a quite boy, could ramble for hours if you asked him about his favorite things. He could tell you everything he knew about bees and Schlatt, at one time, would happily listen. When he returned completely silent Schlatt was at a loss.

He had only known Tubbo for a month. This Tubbo anyways, four year old Tubbo was different. He only knew his son for *a month* before losing him again. He came back different. Schlatt still loved him the same, ender of course he did. He was his son after all, but even to the man who’d known him for merely a month found the silence unnerving.

After a little time though he healed. A few words turned into sentences and sentences into rambles. Schlatt held his hand every step of the way. The President keeping Tubbo on course every time he strayed too far from the path of recovery. He patiently sat as Tubbo struggled to force the words out of his mouth. Now Tubbo could speak for little bursts of time without much of a problem. At dinner Schlatt and Quackity would talk, every once in a while it would make Tubbo think of something and he’d ramble for a few minutes. Neither of the adults minded.

Once they finished their meal they stood and took their now dirtied dishes back to the kitchen. Schlatt didn’t notice Quackity stepping back into Tubbo until the bowl fell to the ground and shattered. Schlatt froze and mentally prepared himself for another heartbreaking panicky attack, yet Tubbo just stared at the pieces. His ears lowered and his shoulders tensed but there was no rush of apologies. No tears filled his eyes and he didn’t sink to his knees immediately trying to amend the wrongs he had done. He didn’t even flinch when Quackity reached out to set a hand on his arm. “Are you okay Turbo?” He asked.

Tubbo looked up at him “mhm” before glancing down at the plate and then up to Schlatt. “Uhm, I’m sorry” his fingers twitched around the ends of his sleeves nervously. Schlatt smiled “It’s okay bud” Quackity guided the boy past the glass. Schlatt watched in surprise. He was calmer than Schlatt had expected. He really *was* healing well.

Schlatt put his hand on Tubbo’s back so both of them were touching him as he guided him out of the room. “I’ll get someone to clean that up” Quackity disappeared down the hallway. Schlatt continued leading Tubbo through the white-house and to his office. Tubbo’s shoulders lost their tension and he leaned towards Schlatt. Once in his office Schlatt pulled Tubbo into a hug and pressed a kiss to the top of his head. “I’m so proud of you kiddo” the words were mumbled into the boy’s soft fluffy hair.

Tubbo had come farther than Schlatt thought. He was.. braver than he assumed. Schlatt kept the boy in his arms as he started to think. Tubbo didn’t seem to notice how long the hug had lasted. He reveled in his father’s embrace. “Tubs” Schlatt pulled away and looked down at him. Quackity entered the room as he spoke. “I need to talk to you about something.”

Quackity’s expression shifted. They both shared a look before Schlatt led Tubbo into the chairs in his office. He sat Tubbo down in front of him. Not across the desk, he wanted Tubbo close. So he moved the chairs and they sat in front of the desk. Tubbo looked worried as Schlatt took his hand gently.

“Dream escaped” he decided to be blunt. Tubbo’s hand left his own as he shrank back into his chair. His back pressed up against it as his wide eyes looked up at Schlatt. “W-what” his voice quivered. The fear his instincts had spared him from moments earlier surfacing. Maybe he wasn’t as ready as Schlatt thought. The President stood and pulled him into his arms.

Tubbo’s hands grabbed his arms but didn’t attempt to move him away. Instead locked around him desperately pulling his father closer to himself. His panicking mind looking for any form of protection it could grasp. “I’m sorry Tubbo.” Schlatt was quick to start petting his hair. His fingers brushed through hair and against the bases of the boy’s horns in a comforting manner. “I’ll protect you I swear Tubbo. I’d die before letting Dream get you again”

Tubbo didn’t cry. He sat in Schlatt’s arms trembling fearfully. A terrifying fog settled into his mind. Dream was free. Dream was somewhere- he could be attempting to get Tubbo. He could be trying right now. He’d come and and- what if Quackity got stabbed again. What if *Dad* got stabbed. He didn’t realize his breathing had picked up.

“Tubbo breath with me.” Schlatt broke him from his thoughts. He moved Tubbo’s hand to his chest and breathed the way he wanted Tubbo to mimic. “No no- please no” Tubbo struggled. He didn’t want Dream to find him again. He wasn’t sure he’d survive it this time. He felt Schlatt’s hand on his own. Calloused and big, different then Dream’s. “Dad please please” he whimpered moving closer to Schlatt. His dad would protect him.

“I’m here Tubbo.” Schlatt assured. Quackity stood behind Tubbo unsure what to do. He decided to let Schlatt deal with it, he’d probably be the best. “I’m not going anywhere Tubs I promise. You’re safe”

Tubbo seemed to calm a bit at that. His breathing slowed again. “Dont-“ he struggled to force the words out. The thought of Dream making it hard to talk again. Phantom hands wrapped around his throat. “Dont let me go back please” he begged and closed his eyes. Schlatt’s heart nearly broke at that.

“Never.” He wrapped his arms back up around Tubbo completely shielding him from the world. After a moment Quackity decided to join the hug, to join protecting the boy. “Never” Schlatt repeated.

Tommy woke up from a nightmare. It had been about Dream. The man, his brother, his abuser, had been hitting Tubbo while Tommy was forced to sit and watch. He’d never seen Dream hit Tubbo before, yet his mind was plenty capable of imaging the scenario in great detail. He had struggled and begged for him to stop. Dream didn’t listen, of course. His Dream ended when the man landed a solid kick to the boy’s head. It snapped back and hit the wall with a sickening crack. Blood was pooling instantly and Tommy screamed only to sit up in his bed.

The first thing he registered was the arms that wrapped around him. He was held tightly against something warm, the comfort made him instantly melt into it without being completely aware of what it was. A mystery in his dazed state, yet still familiar. His eyes adjusted to the dark as he became aware enough to hear the gentle sound the owner of the arms was making. It was small and kind, attuned to that of a bird chirping. Gray feathers grazed his skin as he looks up. He recognized the blond hair and gentle eyes instantly. “Dadza?” He croaked through his now hurt throat from the yelling he’d done moments ago.

“That’s me” the man confirmed. His fingers gently brushed through the boy’s feathers. “Dads here” Tommy slumped forward against his chest. The usually proud boy who was too much of a ‘big man’ for physical affection was defenseless to the gentle touches. His dream played again in his mind and he whimpered.

Why was he so upset? His nightmare was about Tubbo getting hurt, not him. He shouldn’t be so shaken up. It was just- The boy’s screaming and begging for help echoed through his head. He wanted to cup his hand over his ears, to scream louder than the noise produced by his own thoughts and memories. He didn’t want to listen to the sound that slowly broke him on the inside. Guilt piled on top of him. Stop stop stopstopstop he just *wanted it to stop*.

Phil hummed quietly. The small noise breaking him out of his thoughts. It gave him a small escape from the merry-go-round of misery that had been circling in his head since he regained semi consciousness in his asleep state. The same one that had haunted his dreams for years.

He didn’t cry, vulnerable state or not Tommy would not cry in his father’s arms. Not again. He wasn’t aware when Phil had picked him up but he realized he was being carried through the silent halls. Phil was a little shorter than him, but stronger. His wings added extra support to

holding the boy. If he was completely awake he might have told the older off for such an embarrassing thing, to be carried like a baby, yet Tommy was too tired. And well, he'd never admit it, but the feeling was kind of nice.

Phil carried him to his room. Tommy hadn't actually been in it yet, but he recognized the door. That's why he was surprised when they entered. There wasn't a bed. Not on the ground at least. Phil's bed sat suspended in their air by a thick rope. Tommy tilted his head and Phil's wings unwrapped from around him and pushed them up into the air. Phil carried him up and set the boy down on the circular bed gently. It wasn't a normal bed. It dipped in the center and was filled with various soft pillows and blankets. Like a nest almost he realized.

"Why-" He began before Phil shushed him gently. This wasn't the first time the man had helped with a nightmare, but he'd never taken Tommy here before. A hand swept the hair out of his face so he could look up at his father. He leaned into the touch on instinct. "It's okay Toms just sleep" the man sighed as he positioned himself next to Tommy. He didn't try to hold the boy to his chest like he might have with Wilbur at a young age, but he draped his dark wing over the boy.

Eventually Tommy calmed down but he didn't sleep. Instead he inched closer to Phil and begrudgingly pressed his head to the man's chest. His face was red as he did so but Phil pretended not to notice. He just reached his hand up and ran his finger through Tommy's unruly locks.

"Nightmare?" Phil questioned after a moment of comfortable silence. A rather obvious assumption yet he still looked for confirmation. Tommy shifted his weight as his wings curled around himself. "Yeah. Was about.. him. But it's fine. Dream is locked up."

Phil tensed and Tommy looked up frowning. "Right?" A moment of silence passed. Phil didn't look at him. Tommy pulled away from his arms and sat up. "What the fuck?" He hissed scrambling back. Phil sat up quickly after and held his arms up. "Tommy-"

The boy stood on the bed and it swung a bit from the force "you're joking. He is locked up right? Tell me the bitch is locked up" his voice grew in volume. Phil stood up and grabbed the boy's shoulders. "Tommy calm down" he spoke quickly.

Anger clouded Tommy's vision. It was his instinctual defense mechanism against fear. A brave face was his only shield in battle, he'd learned that lesson years ago. "No!" Tommy shrieked as he stumbled further back. The boy nearly fell over the edge before Phil grabbed his wrist and pulled him forward into his chest.

Tommy struggled as Phil turned. The other let go and dropped Tommy into the center of the nest. The boy moved back to the edge but made no attempt to stand up. He stared at the king. Thoughts ran wildly across his mind. If Dream was free..

"Why didn't you tell me?" He felt hot tears pool in the brilliant blue eyes that sat on his face, fueled by his feelings of anger and betrayal. Phil looked down shamefully. "He didn't escape that long ago Tommy. I was going to tell you.. I just didn't know how"

Tommy stood and flew off the edge. Phil went to stop him but Tommy was already out the door. The loud slam noise bounced on the walls through his room. Phil sunk down against his bed as his wings curled around himself. He was just trying to help his son. *What had he done?*

Together

Chapter Summary

Sorry it took so long

<3

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Tommy and Tubbo sat in the Manberg library. After getting told, on accident, about Dream, Tommy wanted to leave. He didn't even tell Phil goodbye, instead packing shit and telling Wilbur when he was already out the door. He thought he'd be in trouble but no one from the Antarctic empire has yet to stop him so he stayed.

Schlatt had been fine with him coming, unannounced as it was. He'd left Tommy and Tubbo alone to do as they pleased most of the time. On occasion he'd peek into the room they were in, Quackity too, just to make sure they were okay.

Tubbo was across from him reading a book. Well, struggling to anyway. Apparently he had dyslexia. Tommy didn't know what that was at first. Schlatt had noticed Tubbo having problems reading and for him to be diagnosed. The doctor said he had dyslexia which meant letters looked different, so it was harder to read. Tommy could see the way Tubbo was a bit happier with a book in his hand. His struggle to read was normal, Dream had treated him like it wasn't. He remembers when they were younger and Dream would scold Tubbo for being "stupid", cruel words he was too young and naive to register as wrong thrown at the ram boy.

Another one of those things he should have noticed. The way he hovered over Tubbo's shoulder glaring while his friend shrunk under Dream's gaze. The dangerous hand set on Tubbo's shoulder and the way he flinched-

No Tommy had no way of knowing. He was just a kid. Tubbo's ears flicked happily as he read, his legs kicking out under the table. They were both still kids.

Tubbo looked up at him when he noticed Tommy staring. Tommy had a book too, but he hadn't read much of it. Not that Tommy didn't like reading, but there was too much on his mind. No words were spoken but the look they shared was enough to prompt Tommy to say what had been on his mind. "How are you so calm?"

While Tommy was a ball of anxiety, foot tapping on the floor and mind racing between the present and the past, Tubbo looked completely content. He'd looked so *happy* and Tommy didn't understand it. Tubbo's smile faltered a bit. "I'm not"

He raised an eyebrow. The other certainly looked calm to him. Tubbo set his book down. "Tommy I'm.. terrified" he watched Tubbo fidget as he spoke. Tommy bit his tongue as the mood in the room shifted. He ruined their peace didn't he? Ender of course he did. "I'm so scared of Dream getting us again Tommy I keep thinking about it and"

When Tubbo brought his hand up to his neck Tommy's wings lowered. "I'm not calm Tommy I'm just trying my best to ignore it. I know my dad will protect me and I know your family will protect you" he met eyes with Tommy.

Tubbo had complete trust in the adults that swore to protect them. They failed once yet his belief in them never faltered. Tommy wished it was the same. Logically, he knew they'd protect him. He knew he'd be safe in the castle or the white house with the added securities brought in after their capture. But his feelings out-weighed the rationality in his mind.

He worried immensely of Dream taking him. He hadn't been able to sleep well since finding out, and even then he had problems sleeping beforehand. Tommy was paranoid. Dream planted it into his head at a young age, his brother- that *Dream* got whatever he wanted. He wanted Tommy, why should this be any different.

But he saw it now. The undertone of fear in Tubbo's eyes. The little changes in his body language from the last time he'd seen his pseudo brother. The way his eyes flickered to the doors and windows, or the way his ears twitched at any sound they couldn't see happening. Tommy could see it now, the clouded thoughts in his mind parting just enough for him to really see just how terrified Tubbo was. He could tell, changes subtle as they may be. Tommy could always tell.

He could in the cabin, and he could now. He acted now similarly to how he had when Dream would visit the cabin. His discomfort was never obvious, no that would be far too dangerous, but he'd adapted to let himself panic in a way Dream wouldn't notice. Tommy doubted Dream would ever pick up on most of the little things that made Tubbo, well Tubbo. He never really spent time with the ram boy and when he did..

Dream wouldn't notice.

"Toms" his wings puffed up. Tommy kept his fears masked too, a little less subtle than Tubbo but he doubted many more than the boy he grew up with could notice. Tommy sighed and leaned back in his chair "I know I know they will I just.."

Tubbo understood. He got up from the chair and walked over to Tommy. The winged boy stood too just as the other made it to his side and they embraced. "Clingy bitch" he grumbled as he held onto the older boy tightly. It didn't solve his problems, but the stable support Tubbo's hug calmed his nerves.

He rested his chin on Tubbo's shoulder hunching over slightly. "I know it's scary Toms" Tubbo's shoulders tensed in the hug. They clung to each other, borderline desperately as their walls started to crumble in the company of each other. Their walls were for defense, to keep their feelings hidden, but they never had a reason to hide from each other. "But we'll face it together, just like we always do"

Tommy slid from the hug and looked down at Tubbo. They stared at each other silently for a few moments before Tommy raised his hand up, pinky extended to Tubbo. The ram boy looked down and interlocked his pinky with Tommy's. Some might consider it a childish action, but Tommy for once didn't care about how others would see him. They could think he was childish. "Together?" He asked. Tubbo smiled.

"Together"

Ranboo had been trying to decipher what the book said. The child scanning and reading it every day to try and understand. Papa said he apparently could translate it, that's why he gave it to him... but it was hard. Ranboo only deciphered one word, and it was useless. It was the word *gateway*. The word had no meaning without the rest of the incantation. You can't play a song with only one note, and you can't open a portal with only one word.

His tail wagged nervously and his ears were down. He was in his bed, not bothering to go to the living room to read it. Where he sat wouldn't make a difference and he couldn't waste anymore time. Papa could come back any second and if he didn't decipher the book he'd get punished. Well he figured as much anyway. Maybe he wouldn't, maybe his papa would understand. But Dream never understood. His hands have been shaking and trembling uncontrollably because of how hurt they were. He didn't want to face Dream's wrath again.

So he continued to read, trying to understand it.

He didn't know it now, but Dream walked in the hallways of his castle, people and hybrids looking at him. Some cowered and turned away as to not draw attention to themselves. The king had a cruel reputation after all. Dream was going to go check on Ranboo, he hadn't seen him in three days. He assumed that was enough for the child to translate the book for him. He was an enderman hybrid after all, it simply came natural for the boy to read the language. Young as he may be, he *should* be able to translate the book.

Dream cursed himself a little for forgetting it, but that's what Ranboo was for. Originally Ranboo served a purpose for him just as Tommy did. He'd translate the book when Dream needed it. But Dream had grown somewhat attached to the boy. Even more than he did with Tommy. Ranboo was a lot more submissive and shaky lately due to him punishing the boy. He probably made it a priority to translate that book for Dream. That was good.

When the man got to his door's quarters, he unlocked the locks from it quickly, and stepped inside. He couldn't see Ranboo in the living room, the child was probably in his room then. Usually he preferred it if Ranboo stayed out of his room during the day but he didn't really care at the moment. He just needed the book.

"Ranboo, come here." Dream called. Ranboo hadn't heard the footsteps nor the door unlocking. Each step ticking down the seconds to his eventual demise that he was blissfully unaware of. He was too focused on the book, he had to translate it. When he heard Dream's voice he jumped and nearly fell out of his bed.

His head snapped in the direction of the door with wide eyes. Dream was here already? But he wasn't done yet. The boy pulled the book to his chest and stood slowly. On shaky legs he

walked out of his room and into the living room with his head down.

“Ah, there you are Ranboo.” Dream couldn’t help but be a little excited, his tone showing that. “So, have you translated the book?” He forgot to instruct the child to kneel due to how excited he was. His plan was so close, *so close* he just needed those translations. Then he could finally open the portal, years of hard work finally paying off.

“Uh well” Ranboo started. His finger picked at the pages anxiously. He didn’t want Dream to be disappointed in him. “The books it’s.. I don’t really understand it and I- I’ve read it a bunch of times now but- but I don’t think um”

Dream’s smile that was previously on his face disappeared and turned into a stern frown. Ranboo didn’t *understand* ? Bullshit. He just needed to work harder, he had even gave him three fucking days. That was more than enough. He walked over to the boy to stare at the book held by his chest. “Is that so?” His tone alone was laced with threats of violence. Ranboo’s heart dropped. Dream put a hand on the child’s shoulder, and squeezed, before pushing him down.

Ranboo started to apologize on instinct. Dream hadn’t even reprimanded him yet, but he knew it was going to happen. “I- I tried but it just it just didn’t make sense and” he started rambling fearfully “and I don’t know what it says. I mean I- I got one word but it isn’t very useful so I’m sorry I tried really I’m sorry I just don’t-“

The man groaned, and yanked the book from the boy. “I don’t want you hear your fucking excuses.” He held the book with one hand, thumb in the crease. He didn’t let go of the child’s shoulder. “I gave you three days Ranboo, three *whole* days. What else could you have possibly been doing these three days?”

“Nothing! Nothing that’s all I was doing. I just can’t do it, I can’t.” He looked up at the book

“Useless child.” Dream squeezed his shoulder more. “How stupid can you be?!” The man yelled. Ranboo winced from the pain on his shoulder. “It should come natural to you! What the actual fuck Ranboo? What do you mean ‘you cant’?! You’re a fucking enderman hybrid! They’re supposed to be smart! That’s why I fucking saved you.”

He didn’t take in Ranboo because he wanted a son. Originally, he planned on locking the boy in a room till he needed him and to let a servant take care of him. But the peculiar boy had caught his attention quickly and he started to spend time with the boy. Eventually he started calling Dream Papa. The king never corrected him and just accepted the role, raising Ranboo himself. Teaching him lessons when necessary. Ranboo was meant to be useful, but he’d be lying if he said he didn’t care about the boy.

Ranboo looked down. Dream’s words made his skin crawl. Surely he didn’t mean it, he was just upset. “I’m sorry I tried but- I’m only *part* enderman so, so I don’t know, I don’t understand it”

Dream sighed, and squeezed his shoulder even more, he wanted it to bruise. “You’re right...” Disappointed eyes stared down at mismatched ones. A heavy silence filled the room, one that weighed Ranboo down to the point his shoulders hunched. Dream seemed to benefit from the

silence and Ranboo's submissive nature. Dream straightened himself then let go of Ranboo's shoulder and put his hand to his side. "I saved a fucking dud, a half brained, mentally slow idiot that can't do anything right." His voice was monotoned. "I should have just let you die, you're clearly no use to me." He looked down at Ranboo's figure and sighed. "A shame really, I had grown to like you. Even if you are a fucking freak."

Ranboo flinched, not from the pain on his shoulder but from the man's words. "I'm sorry" he whimpered again. *Freak, Idiot, Dud.* Words that would forever bounce around Ranboo's mind. A moment of grace from self loathing would never be a privilege Ranboo could have. Not after everything Dream said to him.

"You're always sorry Ranboo." The man ran fingers through his blonde hair. "But you never change. Sorry means that you'll try and not do it again. But you always do. I have no choice but to correct your behavior" Dream sighed. "Go get the stick." He hummed, and put the book he was holding on his desk. He waited looking down at Ranboo.

Ranboo went off to get the stick. His mind was racing. He *tried* didn't he? He tried and Papa didn't even care! It wasn't fair. He did everything he could, what more did Papa want? Maybe he should have been smarter but Ranboo didn't know how. He never knew how to make Papa happy. He held the stick in his hands with a tight grip and returned to Dream, yet this time he didn't hold it out to the man instantly. It wasn't fair.

"What's wrong? You seem to be thinking of something." Dream asked, and pushed the child down roughly. He waited for the stick to be raised to him so he could grab it. When Ranboo didn't hand it over immediately he frowned. That was unusual. The boy was usually accepting of punishment.

"Why am I in trouble?" He asked after a moment. The stick remained in his hands. Dream raised an eyebrow. He had just scolded the boy, why was he asking? "Because you didn't try hard enough and wasted three fucking days of my life. Do you *know* how important this is to me? No *us*?" The man held out his hand for the stick. "Now give me the fucking stick."

The boy watched the waiting hand. "But I tried as hard as I could" Ranboo said rather defiantly. He never argued with Dream and he wasn't sure where this had come from. But it wasn't fair to be punished when he tried. What else could he have done? It was like Dream set him up to fail.

Dream looked at the boy, and couldn't help but clench his teeth. He was quick to grip the boy's head by his hair to make him look at him. "Watch your tone with me, Ranboo." He growled, "I don't give a damn if you tried. You failed, that's all that matters."

When Dream had made him look up Ranboo met eyes with Dream. Usually he'd dart them away but this time they remained frozen. Dream no longer seemed like an unbeatable god in his eyes. Dream had been captured, *beaten*, and needed Ranboo's help. Why should Ranboo listen to him? Why should he let himself be mistreated? "But--"

"But nothing." He dropped the child. "Now, I'm going to punish you, you're going to fucking take it with no complaints, if you keep stalling I'll just add more." Dream's tone turned more stern, "Now, give me the stick Ranboo." Dream said, his patience running low as he

looked at the child. His eyes held a cold anger, almost challenging Ranboo to dare to continue his defiance.

The end of Ranboo's tail hit against the floor twitching anxiously. He stared up at Dream and then the stick that was held between his clawed fingers. The ones lined with bruises piled up unjustly across his palms. He'd been fearful and shaky ever since Dream's return but his mind kept going back to the fact Dream had been *stopped*. Dream needed Ranboo to help him. Ranboo did help him and he never even got a thank you, instead he was punished. He tried his best to save Dream. He tried his best to translate this book. He always did everything he could for Dream and he never even cared. Oh, he was going to be in so much trouble. Dream was going to be **very** mad. But Ranboo wasn't going to sit here and take pain he didn't deserve. Not anymore.

“No”

Chapter End Notes

The Ranboo and Dream section was co-written by Lius_Ennui

Love

Chapter Summary

Mm angst

Tw for mentions of calories purposeful starvation, forced anorexia, and body image

Co written by Claireohyutayong in an rp

Chapter Notes

If you decide to skip this chapter because of the TWs above, it's not plot heavy so it shouldn't matter too much

(Spoiler)

Tommy and Tubbo pick flowers while Schlatt and Quackity talk about Quackity's ex

“Why the fuck are we doing this?”

Tubbo looked over at him and raised an eyebrow. They were walking through the forest, basket in hand collecting flowers. Tubbo's been grabbing the blues and yellows, while Tommy stuck to mostly red. “What do you mean *why*? ”

His wings twitched anxiously as he glanced around. Okay, sure. He knew why. The wedding was in a week and they needed flowers. They could have bought them from a florist, but Quackity said something about wanting the flowers to be from the forest. Apparently it's the same forest Schlatt proposed in, so the flowers were '*special*' or something.

Tommy knew *why* they were doing it, but he didn't know why *they* were doing it. The White House had plenty of workers who could be out picking flowers. But Tubbo had insisted. He wanted to help with the wedding in any way he could, he'd been pestering Schlatt a bunch about it recently, and while a lot of it he couldn't help with this was something he could do. So he pulled Tommy along of course. Since Tommy was in Manberg at the time.

He grumbled about it, originally not wanting to help, saying he was too much of a big man to pick flowers and it was too much work. Schlatt laughed, made a joke about how he was 'staying in Manberg' and 'could at least try to make himself useful'. He knew it was a joke,

Schlatt didn't mean it. The boy tried to not let himself be bothered by it. A task easier said than done.

Tommy looked down at his basket. "We already have a lot of flowers, how many more do we need?" A wedding probably needed a lot of flowers, but it seemed excessive. Tubbo thought for a moment tilting his head to the side. His eyebrows scrunched together a bit as he thought. "I dunno, a bit more maybe" the boy looked back at Tommy smiling "weddings need a lot of flowers. We need them for the bouquets, the table centerpieces, the flowers to throw down the aisle, the-

"Yeah yeah I get it" he picked up another flower, a rose. Tommy stared down at it. It was pretty, had beautiful red petals and a sweet smell that made even him want to stop and sniff. His eyes traveled to the stem. Pointy thorns, near razed sharp that could cut his hand if he didn't handle the flower carefully. A pretty flower that seemed more dangerous then it looked, it reminded him of Dream. He pushed the thought away as he set the rose into the top of his basket.

They continued walking through the forest. "Where do you think he proposed?" Tubbo asked looking around a bit. Tommy wondered if part of the reason he wanted to do this in the first place was to look for the spot. The blonde boy wasn't sure. What would make a part of the forest more 'proposal worthy' then the rest? He had no idea. Tommy shrugged.

He could tell how excited Tubbo was for the wedding. His friend's eyes lit up every time it was mentioned and his ears flicked happily. He rambled about it before, when they didn't know about Dream. Now he didn't really ramble but that was fine. He was still excited. More now, since it was so close.

"Hey Toms" Tubbo stopped walking and looked over at him. Tommy nearly bumped into the ram boy with how suddenly he stopped. "Hmm?" A moment of silence passed. Tommy met Tubbo's eyes. He was nervous, for what Tommy didn't know. He instantly straightened his posture somewhat worriedly. Seeing Tubbo with any sort of negative expression made him a little protective. Younger then him or not, he didn't want Tubbo to feel bad in any sort of way.

Tubbo couldn't maintain eye contact much longer and his eyes flickered away. His mind instantly raced with possibilities. Tubbo fidgeted with the sleeve of his sweater, the yellow striped one he said was his favorite. He'd worn mostly sweaters after sitting alone in the dark wearing a thin shirt, Tommy figured it was understandable.

"Well my dad and Quackity are getting married right?" He continued walking slower this time. Tommy followed frowning slightly, unsure of where this was going. He was a nervous too now.

Tubbo continued, falling to rambling which Tommy was glad for but he wished it was about something he loved (like bees) and not something that made him so nervous. "So, he's kinda going to become my dad right? I mean I know he isn't my dad, and that him marrying my dad doesn't make him that. He has no reason to consider me his son but.."

Tommy blinked. Oh. That.. wasn't what he expected. "Do you *want* him to be your dad?" Quackity seemed cool, but he didn't think Tubbo would consider him his dad. Then again, he saw the way they acted. It was similar to Tubbo and Schlatt, the way Quackity joked with Tubbo and ruffled his hair. He checked on them just like Schlatt had and when saying goodnight Tubbo didn't say 'I love you dad' he said 'I love you guys' to both of them.

Thinking back now, it seemed like Quackity was Tubbo's dad. Protective and loving, he even got stabbed trying to save Tubbo. Sure, he wasn't related to Tubbo biologically but he wouldn't do all that if he didn't see Tubbo as some form of a son would he?

Tubbo bit his lip for a few steps before speaking "Yes? I don't know" he turned to Tommy. The blonde boy looked down at Tubbo. He looked embarrassed, his head tilted down. There was nothing wrong with wanting to think of Quackity as a father, but Tommy could tell he thought otherwise. Perhaps it was because Dream had mocked Tubbo for thinking of the masked man as his brother, when they were really young. He pushed the from his mind quickly and rubbed the back of his neck "I don't think he'd mind"

He looked down at Tubbo and sighed, putting his hand on the older boy's head "Listen Tubs, I think Quackity cares about you a lot. He acts like he does anyways. Quackity doesn't seem like the kind to be upset over something like that, so really I don't think it's that big of a deal" he let his hand fall to his side and smiled "and if it does bother him then he's just plain stupid"

Tubbo looked up at him and the nervousness melted away. He gave a small smile. "You're right" Tommy shoved him lightly and they kept walking "of course I am, I'm always right big man"

Tubbo picked up another flower and scoffed. "That just isn't true" Tommy smiled and went to look over at him. His smile dropped as his head turned and he grabbed Tubbo's arm in a death grip. His eyes flickered back over to it but- it wasn't there. Tommy blinked. No one was there.

He thought.. he swore he just saw *that mask* . Black eyes staring directly at him through the trees, a porcelain mask framed with a green hoodie. But there was nothing there. A small voice piped up next to him. "Tommy?" He looked over at Tubbo who was looking up at him frowning. Tommy let go of Tubbo's arm instantly, he was holding it harder than he had meant to. Nearly bruising, something that scared him just as much as the mask. He never wanted to hurt Tubbo. "Sorry um" he looked back over in the direction but again, nothing was there.

Tommy's wings curled around himself. He didn't like being in the forest alone, he felt so exposed with Tubbo here. They could be snatched up and no one would know. His nerves had been on edge the whole time but now? His eyes darted around the trees again but there was no sign of the mask. Surely he'd seen it? Unless he was making things up. Hopefully he was, they wouldn't be able to run back to Manberg in time.

Tubbo stared at him silently and grabbed his hand tugging him back around. He saw the way Tommy looked, he knew they'd been in the forest too long by then. "C'mon I think we have enough flowers. We can go back now" Tommy was glad Tubbo could read him as well as he could read the other. Whether or not he knew exactly what had set Tommy off, what he was

worried about, he wasn't sure. But Tubbo probably didn't care. Tommy was nervous, and that was enough for him to try and help. Tommy was grateful.

"Are you sure?" They started walking back towards Manberg. Tubbo glanced at their baskets and squeezed his hand "yeah I think it's enough, we can always get more if we need to" Tommy hummed.

They continued walking all the way back to Manberg, Tommy's nerves lessening with every step. They didn't know it, but a porcelain mask was in fact staring at them through the trees. A smile hidden behind it.

Schlatt and Quackity were in the kitchen cooking dinner for themselves and the boys. Tommy was going home again tomorrow morning, and they probably wouldn't see him again till right before the wedding, so they wanted to make a nice meal. So far, it was kind of a disaster, but that was fine. Schlatt was terrible in the kitchen and Quackity had known that beforehand after being with the man for so many years.

Quackity was mixing a salad when the timer beeped. He looked over at the oven before kicking Schlatt lightly in his ankle. Schlatt stood next to him about to eat *another* one of the small brownies he made earlier for dessert when he turned to Quackity. "Hey-" Quackity rolled his eyes "are you going to take the chicken out of the oven or not?" He looked up at Schlatt raising an eyebrow. Would Quackity trust him cooking? No. But there was no reason he still couldn't be helpful.

Schlatt grumbled and set the brownie back down with the rest. "Fine fine, jeez you're so demanding" he joked, ruffling Quackity's hair as he walked by. Quackity went back to mixing, pouring in just a little more dressing, as Schlatt pulled the chicken out of the oven. The chicken was one of Quackity's favorite recipes, which also happened to be Schlatt's. He wasn't sure about Tubbo, the boy hadn't had it yet, but he hoped he liked it just as much. The smell filled his nose after the oven door opened and Quackity smiled.

Schlatt walked over and set the chicken down on the counter to cool. He went to go grab the brownie again but Quackity swatted at his hand and gave him a *look*. "You know the only reason I'm eating the brownies is because you're so good at baking." Schlatt kissed the side of Quackity's head. Said duck hybrid just huffed rolling his eyes.

"I bet. They probably taste amazing, no thanks to you" he smiled wide. It had been a while since they'd had playful banter like this, the two had been so busy between the wedding and Tubbo. He felt Schlatt walk up behind him as the man's arms slid on to the counter on either side of him.

"Now what's that supposed to mean?" Schlatt asked while grinning, he leaned over so his head was level with Quackity's, keeping him against the counter. Something they'd done before yet- his shoulders tensed. Logically he knew it was Schlatt behind him. The golden ring on his fiancé's finger should have been enough indication of that.

Quackity wasn't standing in the white house anymore. Not inside of his head anyways. He stood in the kitchen that used to be part of somewhere he called home. Much colder than his current ones, darker and less homey. The home he was never exactly excited to come back to, not that he left much in the first place.

"Quacks" the gruff voice of his ex sounded behind him. He shivered hearing the familiar tone. The arms around him melting from Schlatt's loving ones into the ones that had never hugged him in such a caring way. "What the fuck have I told you about cooking?"

*Quackity looked down at the counter in front of him. The salad was now a sandwich, one he remembers clearly trying to make all those years ago. Back when he was dating.. **him** Quackity didn't make food often. His ex would get mad if he ate too much, always controlling what Quackity could and couldn't have.*

Quackity wanted to remove himself from the hold but he couldn't. Like Schlatt, his ex was taller and stronger than him. The biggest difference between them was while Schlatt smiled down at Quackity, his ex scowled. He was angry. If it was Schlatt the man would move his arms the second Quackity voiced is uncomfortable feeling. It wasn't Schlatt. The duck hybrid tried to push down the spike of anxiety that gave him. "I- I was just-" the words died in his throat.

*"Just what?" His ex hissed after a moment of silence. Quackity could feel tears in the corners of his eyes. He didn't want this, why was he here? He left **him**. He should be safe- with Schlatt. Not- not-*

Fingers grabbed his jaw, the hands rough and calloused forcing Quackity to look up. "Are you ignoring me? You know you can't make your own food anymore. You've already had 400 fucking calories today, you don't need anymore." Quackity winced at his tone. Those dark and familiar eyes bore into his and it took all of his willpower not to cower away. He took a shaky breath before speaking. "Jarret I'm hungry. Is one sandwich really that big of a deal?"

He saw the subtle way Jarrett became angrier. Even after all these years he noticed the little changes in his face. His hands on the counter which curled into fists. How he leaned himself moreover Quackity, to further the power imbalance between them. "Of course it is! Do you really want me to lower it back down to 350?"

Quackity looked back down at the sandwich. No, he didn't. Last time he was at 350 he nearly died. He knew Jarrett would do it anyways, he never cared what the amount did to his body. As long as he 'stayed skinny enough'. "Well no but-" One shift in the other's posture and Quackity shrunk down away from him. He cut himself off, just like he had the first time. "No, no you're right. I shouldn't have.."

"Good." Jarrett got off him. Finally. Quackity's trembling shoulders dropped a bit in relief. "Now get out of the damn kitchen already Quackity." He threw the sandwich into the trash. Quackity knew he'd see it at least one more time later when he went to throw something away. He'd stare down at the food just within arms reach and he wouldn't have the guts to take it. He could feel the phantom hunger pains in his gut. Quackity kept his eyes down and left the kitchen quickly.

“Quackity?”

Quackity blinked and the memory disappeared. Yet his heart rate remained sped up and his eyes were still wide as ever. He looked down at the salad and dropped the tongs into the bowl. “I-“ he pushed it away slightly “I’m sorry I didn’t.” Quackity panicked? What had he eaten today? How many calories was he on? He didn’t know, he didn’t know. It was a salad, it wasn’t many calories. But he was so limited. Jarett was going to be so mad, why didn’t he keep track? Why couldn’t he remember? The world around him seemed to fade again. Not as much but he couldn’t tell exactly where he was.

Schlatt stepped away from Quackity to give him space. He looked at his fiancé with concern. He was acting like.. Tubbo. When Tubbo was freaked out, when he thought Schlatt was Dream. “Quackity? What’s wrong?”

Quackity didn’t dare move after Schlatt did. He stayed pressed against the counter, it was easier that way. He didn’t want to stare at finger shaped bruises on his wrists for moving without permission again. Not while he was standing in front of him, his boyfriend already angry. They always made him feel bad, and were too visible to ignore on his once paler skin from years of a lack of nutrients. “I wasn’t going to eat it” he said desperately as his hands shook by his sides.

“What? The brownies? I know you weren’t, you were just scolding me for it. What’s going on love?” Schlatt tilted his head. Quackity never acted like this. Never so.. afraid. It worried him. What happened to his fiancé? He knew Tubbo acted the way he did because of Dream, but he couldn’t think of anyone that would make Quackity act like this. It was so.. sudden. Out of nowhere.

Quackity hesitated and looked up at Jarett, except it wasn’t him. “Schlatt?” He could have sworn he was with Jarett. Then reality set back in. The walls were a soft blue, the ice maker humming quietly as it had been broken for months. His shoulders dropped. He was in the white house. Schlatt’s concerned eye stared back at him. “Yes, it’s me. What’s wrong?” Schlatt took a small step towards Quackity

Quackity let out a shaky breath. *He* wasn’t here, Schlatt was here and Schlatt- Schlatt didn’t care what he ate. He was so stupid reacting like that. “Nothing, nothing it’s fine” Quackity looked away.

Schlatt was already dealing with his own problems and Tubbo’s. He didn’t need Quackity’s very old problems; the duck hybrid never got around to sorting them out. He didn’t need to, they were old. He was over it. He was fine. His fiancé seemed to think otherwise. “Well it’s clearly not nothing, you’re shaking” True, but he was *fine*. Schlatt took Quackity’s hands “You can tell me anything, you know that right?”

Quackity nodded. He couldn’t speak yet, he felt too embarrassed. He couldn’t believe he reacted like that, there was no reason to. Quackity let himself lean forward towards the other man. Schlatt took the invitation and moved forward. He wrapped his arms around Quackity “You don’t have to tell me if you don’t want to. I just want to help and make sure you’re alright and you’re clearly not.” Schlatt stroked Quackity’s wings gently “but if you want me to drop it I will.”

His fiancé was always understanding. With him and with Tubbo. Quackity sighed “No I do it’s just.. hard” he was glad his face was tilted to the man’s chest, he wasn’t sure he could bear looking at him now. He didn’t want Schlatt to see him like this. “You just um, scared me a bit”.

Jarett hadn’t been on his mind recently, his ex usually circling into his mind every few months for a little before being forgotten again. Like a bug he just couldn’t flick off no matter how much he tried. He didn’t want to think about it anymore, he didn’t want to admit to it or call it was it was.

He wasn’t a *victim* . Quackity could have left, he could have. But he *chose* to stay didn’t he? So surely that means he wasn’t a victim and their relationship wasn’t that bad. Sure, Jarett threatened him sometimes to make Quackity stay, or insulted him.. or *grabbed him* or *clipped his wings* . And he was.. terrified a lot. Not wanting to leave or even move, afraid of upsetting him. Cruel words, painful grips, lowered calories allowance. These fears dictating every choice he made for years.

But it was still a choice. Really, it was Quackity’s fault. He *chose* Jarett. He should have left, but he didn’t, so he deserved it. If Schlatt found out.. he’d either coddle Quackity and call him a victim or think he was delusional for staying so long. He didn’t want his fiancé to become like that, to become like the other people who *knew* . Not that it was some secret, again their relationship wasn’t abusive it was normal. Everyone could know about it there was nothing to hide. He just hadn’t told Schlatt yet, there was no big deal. It just hadn’t come up yet. He wasn’t a victim. He was fine.

“I’m sorry love, I didn’t mean to.” Schlatt kissed the top of Quackity’s head and held him close. “Is this okay?” He didn’t want to scare Quackity. The man was unsure what was okay now. He still hadn’t worked out exactly what he’d done this time. He had came up to Quackity from behind before, his fiancé usually didn’t mind. The shorter of the couple usually smiled even, when Schlatt wrapped his arms around the his waist or pinned him against the counter to tease him. He jumped sometimes, a little startled, but never *like that*.

Quackity sighed. He didn’t want this, for Schlatt to worry. “Of course if is,” he tilted his head up and kissed Schlatt’s jaw. He thought about his words as he did so. He wanted Schlatt to understand, so it didn’t happen again, but he didn’t want the other to know exactly *why* . “I just.. need to know before you do it. That it’s you doing it”

Schlatt paused. “That it’s me?”

Quackity cursed himself. Now he’d worry. He didn’t need Schlatt to worry about him too. He had Tubbo to take care of. He didn’t need to take Schlatt’s attention away, it was selfish. “Yeah um- that you’re the one behind me or whatever else you’re doing”

Of course it would be him, stop being stupid

Schlatt grabbed his chin, just like Jarett he couldn’t help but wince, and tilted his head up gently. His eyebrows were pushed together worridley. “Who else would I be?”

Quackity stiffened again “no one- no one else here would of course. I just.. I guess I forgot I was *here* for a moment. Pretty stupid right?” He chuckled and bit his lip. Ender, he should think before speaking. Now Schlatt was going to look at him weirdly, and fucking baby him. He didn’t want Schlatt to do that. That’s why he moved here, away from everyone. Away from the pitying eyes that stared at him as he walked down the street, arms linked with his ex. Willing to stare and mock him with their eyes but no one helped. No one *really* cared.

Or maybe he’d tell Quackity he deserved it. He’d say he was being dramatic. It wasn’t *that* bad. That he was making things up as being worse than they were. He wasn’t sure he could handle that. His thoughts on his own trauma was already bad. He already had a hard time accepting that it was.. wrong in a way. To have what little opinion on his last relationship that wasn’t drowning in self blaming be invalidated would, ruin him to put it simply. He wasn’t sure he could handle it. He was afraid of Schlatt’s reaction. Perhaps it was selfish, wanting him to react a certain way but his mind was racing with all the things that could go wrong.

“Where did you think you were?” Schlatt was confused, trying to connect the dots in his head. He drops his hand from Quackity’s jaw back to his waist. He acted like.. Tubbo. Freaking out, thinking he was somewhere else- *with someone else*. “Quackity has someone been hurting you?” a moment of tense silent. Schlatt held his breath. “No” he pulled away from the hug grabbing Schlatt’s arms looking up. This.. wasn’t a reaction he expected. No pity, no coddling, no avoiding the topic. No dancing around the bush. He asked a direct question. “No it’s fine Schlatt I already said-“

“If someone hurt you it’s not fine” he cut Quackity off. That wasn’t a no. Okay, it was, but the way he said it made Schlatt doubt. ‘No it’s fine’ is different then ‘no one is’. His ear twitched as dozens of thoughts filled his head. Had something been going on and he missed it? Quackity shook his head. “It was a long time ago”

you aren’t over it

“and he didn’t really even hurt me”

yes he did.

Schlatt pulled him closer. “Babe who is ‘he’?” He was worried now. Who was he? Who had been hurting him? Or was hurting him? Quackity went silent a moment. Schlatt couldn’t know, Schlatt couldn’t know. “Nobody, I said it doesn’t matter” He couldn’t tell him, but Schlatt *needed* to know.

Quackity wanted to talk about it, he wanted to scream and cry and yell about what had happened and he wanted somebody to *listen*. It was a heavy weight that just kept growing and growing he knew his legs were seconds from giving out underneath him yet he was scared. He wanted reassurance his feelings were valid, he craved to be reminded he was allowed to be bothered by things and it wasn’t his fault but *nobody could know*.

It was more complicated than just telling. Telling would be.. admitting to it. Changing other people’s perspectives on him. And what if.. Schlatt didn’t want to help. What if Quackity

showed him the horrible weight upon his back he'd been carrying for years and the man decided it wasn't worth it, *Quackity* wasn't worth it. Sure he helped Tubbo, but Tubbo was his son. The duck hybrid couldn't lose Schlatt. Ender, they were getting married *in a week*. He couldn't ruin it now.

"An ex" he admitted a little shamefully. It was worse to admit to then if it had been his parents or something, at least then it wouldn't have been his *choice*. Another reason Tubbo was different. He didn't have a choice, Quackity did. "What did he do?" Schlatt asked, his voice low and wary. With a reaction like that, he was almost worried to know the answer. Quackity shrugged. "I mean nothing bad really"

he starved you

"he just did something similar, came up behind me once"

multiple times, each more terrifying than the last

"so I got a little startled that's all"

Schlatt hummed. He glanced at the clock, the boys shouldn't be home for a while. He couldn't drop this. Not now, he was too worried. "Are you sure that's all? You said something about eating?"

Quackity sighed. Something he didn't want to explain. The food thing was probably the worst part. He'd rather admit to Schlatt about being yelled at and berated, about the clipping and grabbing. The violent stuff, it was easy to admit to. The more.. subtle control he put over Quackity. The mental hold. He didn't want to admit to it. "He um.. got upset when I ate too much sometimes" his face became a little more embarrassed at that. Now Schlatt would know he couldn't even stop himself from eating an unhealthy amount- but no he could. He'd done it for the past 5 years. Jarett was just a fucking psychopath who enjoyed controlling him. Still, it was etched into his mind the whole direction was something he should be *ashamed* of. Be it the voices of himself, his ex, the people around him. Multiple sources scaring him into a painful silence. He was left not uttering a word about the situation before.

"How long were you with him? Were you still with him when you joined to cabinet?" Schlatt didn't think Quackity was on a relationship back then. They had hit it off, even flirted a bit before getting together. And he never spoke of his boyfriend.

"4 years and no, we.. *broke up* a little before that" broke up was a stretch. Technically, they never did. Quackity, for lack of a better term, *ran away* after a particularly bad fight.

"And he didn't let you eat much? For *four whole years*? Quackity.." The duck hybrid couldn't help but whimper quietly. Schlatt he.. sounded so concerned. Why was he concerned? Quackity didn't even want to think about it but.. it wasn't that bad. It wasn't bad why is he concerned? "Of course he let me eat enough, don't be silly Schlatt, he just- just made sure I didn't eat too much"

Quackity didn't seem like the type who'd eat *too much*. If anything he didn't eat enough. He started to wonder, now, if it was the boyfriend's fault. "How much was too much then?"

Quackity shook his head. “Schlatt I-“ tears filled his eyes “it’s fine I said-“ it wasn’t fine. It wasn’t and Schlatt would not accept that. He kept failing his family. First Tubbo, now Quackity. Both suffering and he barely helped them.

“Quackity please work with me here, I just want to help you.” Schlatt placed a hand on Quackity’s cheek the duck hybrid leaned into it. Schlatt gave him comfort constantly, of course. Physically and mentally. Gentle kisses and sweet words were never something Quackity had a shortage of anymore. Yet, he was stuck halfway between the past and the present. Halfway between touch starved and drowning in love. Schlatt’s thumb brushing his cheek grounded him in reality. “Please, I’m not going to get mad, or hurt you or do whatever *he* did.”

Quackity’s head tilted down.

“400” he mumbled

400 “What? He-“ 400. That was low. *Dangerously* low. Schlatt hugged Quackity tightly “He only let you have- oh my Ender Quackity” Quackity wrapped his arms around Schlatt’s neck pushing his head down into the man’s shoulder as the tears he’d been keeping in started to slip out. He couldn’t help but pull his legs up wrapping them around Schlatt’s waist clinging to his fiancé desperately. Something he did when he was anxious, or just really wanted affection. It was obviously the former. Schlatt grunted slightly, knees bending as Quackity jumped up but he quickly put his hands on his thighs, holding him up. The shorter male fitting comfortable in his arms, like a puzzle piece and it’s perfect match. He listens to Quackity as he spoke. “He- it was 350 at first. T-then 400 and I-I-“

Only 400. He’d never put the word only before the number before. It.. fit. How many nights had he gone to bed hungry? How many times did he sit next to Jarett as the other ate food, way more than 400 calories, while he himself was nearly starving. Too many times. That- it wasn’t normal it wasn’t. Quackity knew that, it was bad and abnormal but *he wasn’t a victim* . Only 400. Quackity sobbed.

Schlatt gently tapped the side of Quackity’s head with his horns, mindful of how sharp they were. “It’s alright now, you’re safe with me.” He’d never let Quackity be starved like that again. He wouldn’t let that man near his fiancé, soon to be husband, ever. Unless Quackity told him that’s what he wanted and even then he’d stay and make sure his ducky was safe.

“I wanted to leave I did, I did so badly Schlatt” his hands grasped the back of his fiancé’s shirt desperately. He felt the need to justify it. To justify himself. “I was too *scared* ”

His heart broke as Quackity spoke. The cracks growing a little every time. 5 years and he had absolutely no idea. “I know, I know” Schlatt kissed Quackity’s cheek “But you’re here now and you’re safe and he can’t hurt you anymore. I won’t let him.”

Quackity nodded. That was logical. Manberg was secure, especially now after the incident with Tubbo. Schlatt would do anything to keep his family safe. Yet, he was like Tubbo. Logic was thrown out the window when you couldn’t remember where you were. When your mind is overrun with panic and your instincts kick in, you don’t have the luxury of *logical thinking*. “I- I know that. It just doesn’t *feel* like that sometimes”

Schlatt took a step forward and set him in the counter. He took Quackity's hands into his own and squeezed them gently. "You can always come talk to me about these things. I'll listen for as long as you need me to love."

Quackity sniffled. Schlatt was so good, so good to him. Completely different from Jarett, it was hard to believe he'd fallen for both of them. He leaned towards his fiancé "I know, I just... you don't think it's bad or-or stupid? That I stayed I mean, I could have left--"

Schlatt cut him off. Not to be rude, not because he didn't value what Quackity was saying, but because he couldn't bear to listen to it. Everything he said sounded so *wrong* yet he spoke it like he believed it. That worried Schlatt. "I would never think it's stupid, love. Relationships like that are.. hard to leave. If something bothers you then it bothers me too. I just want you to feel safe and loved."

Schlatt kissed Quackity and looked at him smiling again. "I love you. Really love you, not the way *he* did" Real love, that was built on hard work and trust. Not forced and stolen from fear and control. Schlatt's love was different. It was gentle, kind, and *safe*. He wanted to bask in it forever. Quackity rest his head against Schlatt's. "I love you too.."

The door opened and the two turned their heads. Tubbo stood in the doorway, basked in hand with Tommy behind. His face turned a little red when he saw Schlatt and Quackity. The President instantly took a step back before walking over to Tubbo. "Hey kiddo" he ruffled Tubbo's hair, smiled at Tommy, then looked down at the flowers. Quackity pushed himself off the counter.

"Just in time" he smiled and went over to the chicken which had cooled off enough to eat without burning the boys sensitive taste buds. Especially Tubbo's, his were more sensitive than normal. Tubbo and Tommy set their baskets down on the counter, anticipating the delicious meal that was to come. Schlatt stared at Tommy a little worried. The kid looked off, a little shaken. He tried to put that as overly sensitive fatherly paranoia. Maybe he'd mention it to Phil, but for not it was fine.

Tubbo slid to Quackity's side looking down at the chicken. His mouth watered at the sight of the chicken. "It smells really good" he looked up at Quackity. The duck hybrid smiled. Compliments from Tubbo were common, yet never any less valuable.

"Thanks Tubs" he ruffled Tubbo's hair. His fingers lightly brushed the horns that sat on the boy's head. "I'll always cook my best for you" The boy's ears flicked happily. It was true. He'd spend hours in the kitchen to make Schlatt or Tubbo happy. Cooking was something he enjoyed, and it made other people happy. Tubbo glanced over at Tommy, but he wasn't looking. No best friend support? Fine. He could manage. Tubbo bit his lip for a moment.

"Thanks dad"

Tommy's eyes widened as Schlatt's head snapped over to the two. He wasn't upset, no of course not. He was *happy*. He wanted Tubbo to see Quackity as part of his family, someone he could trust and go to for help. Quackity looked over at the boy in shock for a few moments before smiling wide, a little teary in his eyes no one would mention it, before he wrapped his arm around Tubbo's shoulder.

This was love. This was a choice. Tubbo chose Quackity as a father figure, chose to accept him because the marriage gave him no obligation to. Schlatt and Tubbo *both* wanted him in their family. That filled him with a sense of pride he'd never felt before. Ender, he really loved this family. *His family.*

"I love you Tubs"

Tubbo hugged him back. "I love you too"

Dresscode

Chapter Summary

It's been a while, hasn't it?

I'm sorry this took so long I promise I'm still writing

“Tommy”

The boy stopped walking. They stood in the hallway of the castle, Tommy had just come back from Manberg after staying as long as he could. Phil took a few steps forward and placed his hand on Tommy's shoulder. The silence between them echoed more than words ever could. “I'm sorry”

Another apology. Tommy stared at the ground. He felt Phil squeeze his shoulder, as if it was the missing thing. The reason he hadn't accepted the apology. Tommy, albeit a little selfishly, wished Phil would leave him alone. Perhaps he shouldn't be mad. This grudge he's been holding and building up since he set foot out of the Antarctic Empire seemed unfair after all. Tubbo wasn't bothered by them keeping it a secret.

Tommy was. He hated having things kept from him, having other people make decisions for him. Phil always tried to remedy this. Usually, he asked for Tommy's opinion. He let Tommy choose what color his sheets were, what clothes he wanted to wear, where he wanted to be. He let him choose his name. Tommy was grateful for the self autonomy the king gave him, so maybe it was unfair to use this one thing as an excuse to be upset.

Phil looked at Tommy with sorry eyes. He felt terrible for not telling him. He should have, he realized it now. It seemed he kept making decisions, things he thought would be best for Tommy, but they backfired one after the other. Phil turned Tommy completely towards him. “Toms, I'm really sorry. I should have told you the second we found out. Above anyone else, you two have the right to know. Keeping it from you wasn't right” he spoke slowly hoping Tommy would understand how much he really regretted it.

Tommy's wings dropped as he looked down. “It wasn't right” he growled as his hands clenched into fists. He sounded mad, but truthfully, the earnest tone in Phil's voice made the anger disappear. He was sorry and that was something Tommy appreciated. Besides, Phil was his dad. He shouldn't hold grudges against him, not when he was just trying to do what's right.

Phil sighed and went to speak again, Tommy cut him off. “But.. I.. understand.” He looked up to see Phil smile. He knew it was different then Dream's. He smiled when Tommy caved because it meant he *won*. Phil smiled because he cared about Tommy's opinion. He wanted

Tommy to be happy, to trust him. Having someone care so much about that, your opinions and your feelings, he appreciated it. Especially after living in a situation for so long where his opinions were nothing more than an afterthought.

A moment passed as they stared at each other and Phil pulled him into a hug. "Thank you Tommy. Really, I'm so sorry. I won't make decisions for you anymore I promise. You're old enough. You.. you aren't a baby anymore" the older's smile became solemn at the thought.

Tommy wasn't a baby. He wasn't Theseus, he was almost completely different. It was weird to Phil. Baby Theseus, tiny and adorable with his little puffy golden wings was a different person than Tommy. Tommy was tall, loud, and brave, hardened by years of manipulation yet still holding onto childlike naivety. Nevertheless, they were the same person. Tommy was still his son, even if he'd missed the entirety of the boy growing up save the one single day he was granted when his son was just a baby. And he'd love Tommy just the same. It doesn't matter how absent he was from the boy's life.

He was glad Tommy was the way he was. Even if it was the result of Dream, a terrible person, raising him. Despite the terrible situation he was proud. Tommy could have been self centered, spoiled after years of having everything done for him. He could have expected to never work a day in his life. But he didn't. He worked whenever he needed to, he made his own bed and did his own laundry. He always worried for Tubbo, never putting himself first. Phil was happy he turned out to be such a good kid. He would have loved Tommy anyways, he was at no fault from the situation, but he was still glad. A little short tempered sure, but Tommy was definitely someone to be proud of.

Phil ruffled his hair before pulling away from the hug and Tommy made a face. "I just remembered. We're going to Schlatt and Quackity's wedding right?" He said.

The boy looked up at Phil. The king raised an eyebrow at the face and laughed "Yes we are, what's up?"

Tommy was happy for the wedding. Schlatt and Quackity seemed to like each other a lot, not that he could tell really he barely paid attention to them, but still. He was so happy for Tubbo to have the family he deserved. He'd read about kids having parents before, both of them and it was something he was glad Tubbo got to have. Not that he was upset. Phil was a single parent and he loved his dad, he didn't need anyone else especially not with his brothers. Nevertheless seeing how happy the three of them were, especially Tubbo, made him happy too. The marriage was something to be celebrated and he'd gladly go. But

"Do I have to wear a suit?"

Phil stared at him for all of 5 seconds before laughing again. Tommy's eyebrows screwed together "what's so funny?" It seemed like a normal question to him. Tubbo was wearing a suit after all.

Phil just tilted his head "I mean, if you want. People typically dress nice for weddings but you can wear whatever you want Toms. Do you really think Techno was going to wear a suit?"

Tommy tried to imagine Techno in a business suit like the one Schlatt wore and smiled. No, probably not. He wore dress shirts and fancy clothing sure, but Tommy doubted he'd ever see his big brother in a suit like that. Not that he thought about it Wilbur probably wouldn't either. He usually wore soft sweatshirts, similar to the ones Tubbo wore. Phil made a small motion with his hand, waving it off "Tubbo is wearing a suit because he's in the wedding. Though, I don't think Schlatt would make him if he didn't want to. We're just guests so the dress code isn't strict. I'm certainly not wearing a suit"

"Okay good" Tommy rubbed the back of his neck. He didn't want to wear a suit. They'd feel too.. constricting.

Phil put his hand on Tommy's arm leading him down the hall. "Wilbur and Techno will be happy you're back. Wil has been pestering us about a game night" that sounded fun.

Tommy didn't really like 'game nights' before with Dream. They were always uncomfortable and rarely ended well for Tubbo. But, with his family, he was sure it would be nothing of the sorts. He let an easy smile slip onto his face. "I don't know why Wilbur is so excited to lose"

Tubbo sat curled up on his bed, Quackity sitting criss crossed next to him. They had taken some of the flowers and began twisting them together to form strings of them. Quackity showed Tubbo how to do it and helped him when necessary the first few times he did it. Tubbo smiled happily glad for the help and glad to spend time with *his dad*. Schlatt didn't know about this yet, the two had stolen the flowers and slipped off to the younger's room. It was only a matter of time before he went to look for his missing fiancé and son. But for now, they sat alone laughing between each other as they joked around.

They were making headpieces for the wedding. The two of them decided to wear a flower crown. They were also, of course, forcing Schlatt to wear one as well. The crown they were making for him was meant to wrap around his horns. They used some of the red flowers Tommy picked, so it would match his tie.

"This was a good idea Tubs." Quackity smiled as he looped another flower onto the chain. Schlatt may like more masculine things, but Quackity thought his fiancé would be open to wearing this. Especially if it's what Tubbo wanted. He'd practically do anything for his son, all it took was a small puppy dog look for him to agree. Though, usually that wasn't even necessary.

"You think he'll like it?" Tubbo looked up at him tilting his head. The ram boy and spent extra time on Schlatt's, he wanted it to be perfect. There was no reason for Schlatt not to like it, but he always doubted himself. He'd made things for Tommy before and the boy always liked it, but when he did it for Dream at a young age he was often scolded. So he was hesitant to do things like this. He could handle Dream dismissing his gifts, even belittling him for it, but if Schlatt ever did such he'd completely break. His worry was broken when Quackity ruffled his head "Of course he will"

Tubbo visibly relaxed at that. Of course, Schlatt had never said a negative thing to him. *Of course* his dad wouldn't hurt him like that. Schlatt loved everything he did, no matter how

big or small. He just let himself lean into Quackity's hand as he smiled gently.

Quackity hated the fact the boy had to ask such a question, but he didn't mind answering if that's what he needed. Anything to give Tubbo peace of mind. The two looked up when the door opened and Schlatt peaked his head in. The President's curious expression shifted into an amused smile and a raised eyebrow. "So this is where you two ran off to"

Schlatt entered the room and closed the door behind him. Quackity pulled his hand from Tubbo's head and picked up the flower crown. He waved it a bit and Schlatt looked over at it as he crossed the room. The younger ram boy turned to Schlatt happily and held out the flower crown he'd made specifically to fit with his dad's horns. His little furry ears flicked happily as he grinned.

The older ram looked down at the scene happily. Tubbo's expression was genuine and it warmed his heart. Between that and the fact Quackity and Tubbo were spending time together he couldn't be happier. There was a brief moment of time, where he worried about the two. When he first started to date Quackity he always worried about Tubbo coming back and if that would cause problems. He would do anything for his son he lost, but he'd fallen for Quackity. So when the two seemed to fall into place, Quackity taking a fatherly role, his worries washed away.

"This ones for you" Tubbo explained. Schlatt crouched down next to the bed and Tubbo reached up setting the crown on his head. Quackity set the flower crown he held on Tubbo's head. The boy giggled and Schlatt couldn't help but hug him. His laugh was a sound he'd want to hear forever.

Tubbo pulled away and held the final flower crown up to Schlatt. The President took it and stood before looking over to his fiancé. Quackity tilted his head and smiled, Schlatt leaned over kissing his forehead before he put the crown down on his messy hair. "The flower crowns are perfect love" he looked over to Tubbo "Thank you Tubs"

Tubbo couldn't help but laugh happily at the praise. He pushed forward and hugged Schlatt again. Quackity was right, he did love it, but hearing it from Schlatt himself made him happier than ways he could describe. He looked over Tubbo's head and over at Quackity. The two shared a knowing look. Schlatt smiled, and kissed the top of Tubbo's head before leaning over and kissing Quackity. He loved both of them, and in this moment he realized his family really was perfect.

Perfect

Chapter Summary

I looked at wedding vows for 30 minutes for this chapter :')

Schlatt stood by the altar waiting anxiously for Quackity. A mix of pure happiness and stress whirled into his gut. His mind was a wreck despite it being one of the best days of his life. He'd anticipated this moment for over a year now, yet it didn't feel truly real then. Not when he proposed, not when they planned or decorated or got dressed. It wasn't until now, when he stood in front of the altar waiting for Quackity, did it really set in. He was going to marry him.

Schlatt couldn't think of a more perfect person to spend the rest of his life with. Quackity was beautiful and kind, he helped Schlatt in one of the lowest points of his life. While other people turned their heads, trying to ignore the utter mess he'd become after losing both his son and wife, Quackity looked directly at him.

He didn't look away out of disgust, or fear, or any other reason everyone else ignored his antics. Quackity looked Schlatt directly in the eyes and helped him. He couldn't be more grateful. There was no doubt in his mind if he had continued with his horrible habits, he wouldn't have lived long enough for Tubbo to be returned. He never would have been able to hug his son again. Tubbo would have been without a father. He most likely would have gone with Phil which wouldn't have been the worst fate for the boy, but it wasn't the same. Tubbo deserved his actual father. Schlatt shook his head a bit. No, there was no point thinking about it. He was here, and he'd be here for his family as long as he could.

Schlatt helped Quackity in return. They needed each other. It was only recently he'd found out about Jarett, something he was still a little surprised to not have known about sooner, yet it also made sense. It was personal. It also explained why Quackity was so thin and jumpy when they met, something he had noticed but never could have guessed was the result of a previous relationship. He'd helped Quackity eat more, and after a while his jumpy nature died down. His heart ached for his fiancé, almost husband, and thinking what he went through and how for a long time he had no idea. He was glad to have been told. Secrets like that are not easily given, they are the kind locked in a vault and surrounded by doubts and second guessing. Schlatt trusted Quackity and in return the shorter male trusted him completely as well.

Now they were a family, him, Quackity and Tubbo. When he finally watched Quackity walk down the aisle time stopped for a moment. Just one, and then everyone melted away as Quackity walked. Perfect. Yes, that was the first word that came to mind. His country was perfect, this wedding was perfect, his son was perfect and his family was perfect and Quackity was perfect. He wore a suit, one done by the same tailor Schlatt's and Tubbo's were

done by. His tie was a royal blue, and his hair crowned with two messy braids Tubbo did, accompanied by the flower crown. Apparently Techno had taught Tommy and Tubbo how to braid after his son pestered the prince. The little braids, as messy as they looked, were cute. Tubbo's eyes had practically lit up at the opportunity to do his hair.

"Welcome, friends and family of the grooms. Today we are here to join Schlatt and Quackity in a lifelong bond. The vows, President Schlatt you can go first."

The ram hybrid took a deep breath smiling at his partner. The vows were something he'd gone over a dozen times. Be it in front of a mirror, in front of Tubbo, or even Phil once, he practiced them. Schlatt wanted them to be perfect, because no other way would be acceptable enough to express his love for Quackity.

"I take you Quackity, to be my husband. I stand here before you, and everyone, looking into your beautiful eyes and am reminded just how much I love you. I promise to love you every single day because ever Quackity, I don't think I could live without you even if I wanted to. I don't just promise to go through all the ups and downs of life with you Quackity, I know we'll go through them together because we have for the last 5 years and that will never change. I love you, and through every single rough patch that's been the one constant in my life. I've made a lot of shitty mistakes in my life, a lot of things I regret, but I will never regret asking you out, and choosing to pull you into my family Quackity because it is by far one of the best decisions I ever made.

He smiled warmly, the fond feeling in his heart only grew when he saw Quackity's eyebrows turn up. A small smile spread over the duck hybrid's face and Schlatt was proud. Everything he said was true, down to every single word and he'd never take any of it back. Quackity's wings fluttered a bit behind him. The priest spoke again "and now for Quackity's vows"

Quackity gave a small timid smile. "Schlatt I- I take you as my husband, something I knew I wanted to do since the first time I said I loved you. Mi amor you've shown me love in ways no one else has before. Not a single moment has passed since the day we went out where I didn't love you, and that won't change. You brought everything I didn't know I lacked into my life and I'm so, so grateful. I love you more than I could explain in the short time we have here at the altar, but I really really do love you so much."

The priest smiled at the vows, and so did the audience. Not only the words but the conviction and earnestly in their words left no doubt to the viewers that the two loved each other wholeheartedly. The 'I do's' were given without hesitation and they exchanged rings, and the priest closed his book. "Well then, I now pronounce you two as husband and husband. You may now kiss your spouse."

Schlatt had already started moving before the priest had said the words. They'd kissed hundreds of times before but he'd been anticipating this one all day. They were married now, and this kiss symbolized it. He slipped his arm around Quackity's waist pulling him closer, leaning forward because his fiancé- husband was shorter. He was a little surprised, he didn't even feel embarrassed with so many people staring at them. He had wondered beforehand if he would worry, but in that moment it didn't matter. It was just him and Quackity. When they finally pulled away from the kiss that was perhaps a little longer than necessary he rested his

head against Quackity's. "Ender I love you" the ram hybrid mumbled. Yes, today was definitely perfect.

All good things must come to an end, even wedding bells

Chapter Summary

I'm sorry this took so long, I've had some stuff going on personally and I know it's been over a month but I swear I haven't abandoned this story!!

I'll try and update more now

<3 <3 <3

Tommy and Tubbo broke off from the wedding a little after the vows and everything. While they were happy for the ceremony, they were still kids and they found the event rather boring. The two couldn't help but nearly beg to go off on their own. Schlatt reluctantly agreed after Tubbo gave him puppy dog eyes, and Phil was rather easy to persuade. So they walked off through the forest by the wedding reception, promising to stay close.

They didn't stay close enough.

"You're such a slow bitch" Tommy teased, running forward ahead of Tubbo. The shorter boy pretended to be upset, whining about how Tommy was being unfair, but a huge smile sat upon his face as he scrambled to catch up with his friend.

Tommy's wings flapped behind him, giving him a little boost before he tripped on a branch and cursed, tumbling to the floor. Tubbo gasped, he ran over and giggled at the state Tommy was left in. "Hey! Help me up you asshole" the younger grumbled.

Tubbo looked him over, still laughing. He'd gotten tangled in some of the vines on the ground. Tommy kicked up at the other the best he could and Tubbo lifted his hands in surrender "alright alright I'll help you, jeez". The boy crouched down and grabbed one of the vines, about to help Tommy get up. He didn't notice the look on Tommy's face, and how the boy was staring off behind him. He jolted though, when he heard a familiar voice.

"Tubbo"

His ears pressed down against his head immediately, head whipping around to face the voice that he'd hoped to never hear again. Not alone with Tommy, in a forest, out of hearing distance from his dad.

"D-Dream"

The man stood behind him, his usual mask missing but he grinned just as wide. His eyes flickered briefly over to the person who stood near him. There was another man, taller than

Dream. A hybrid he realized, from the boy's half split skin and mismatching eyes, the tail and horns. Dream didn't like hybrids.

He was covered in bruises.

For a moment him and the other hybrid locked eyes and a feeling he could quite describe filled Tubbo. The mismatched eyes left his near immediately, flicking to the floor, and Tubbo looked back to Dream. Was this hybrid like him? Had Dream given him those bruises? *Is he like me?*

"It's been a while Tubsy, running away *again* was so irresponsible" Dream leaned forward and reached out to Tubbo. The ram boy flinched away, stumbling and falling behind Tommy who was still tangled in vines. Dream looked down at him and tilted his head at his restraints "You know, that makes my job a lot easier"

"No- fuck off" Tommy sneered, pulling on the vines again as he strained his neck to look back at Tubbo "run, Tubbo run as fast as you can" the boy's mind was racing, worried for his friend's safety. He didn't want Dream to get to Tubbo, *not again*.

He'd been beaten, ridiculed, choked, *starved*. There wasn't much more Dream could do, beside killing him and just the thought made Tommy's heart drop. He would prefer Tubbo escaping instead of helping him, and luckily the boy ran around Dream and back of the direction of the wedding.

Dream watched him, growling before turning and shoving the taller hybrid lightly "well? Fucking go after him" the man snapped. The other hybrid flinched, and Tommy frowned at the interactions

"Y-yes sir" Ranboo stuttered, before going after Tubbo. Dream turned back to Tommy, and the icy look in his eyes made the boy freeze. He forgot about Tubbo escaping, and his brief worry for the taller hybrid at the look. For the first time, he was worried for himself. Because that look only meant one thing, after years Tommy had learned to recognize it well. It meant Tubbo was going to get beat, except Dream was looking at *him* this time, not Tubbo.

"This is fucking ridiculous" Dream snapped, moving to crouch next to Tommy. He unsheathed his knife, undoing the ropes just enough to tie him with rope. The man was being rather rough as he did so. "Making me go through so much trouble, I'm your brother Tommy how *dare* you disobey me again? Running away? Forcing Tubbo to run away again? Why are you always dragging Tubbo along to be disobedient with you, when you know it's only going to hurt him?"

He grabbed Tommy's jaw, and the boy glared back "you aren't my brother"

The man's hand moved back before he could even react, and before Tommy knew it he felt a sharp stinging pain on the side of his face.

Dream hit him.

His eyes watered from the pain, his breath caught in his throat and Tommy's determination faltered. Terrified eyes moved back to Dream's, before he forced himself to glare again. Tubbo had gotten worse, he couldn't let himself break over one hit.

Dream hit me

"Fuck you" Tommy snapped

Dream dropped him, he fell back against the ground grunting, pulling on the rope and Dream just rolled his eyes. "Keep the attitude up, Tommy. I swear, you'll regret it. I'm sick and tired of dealing with your mouth"

They glared at each other for a few more minutes, sitting in the near silence of the forest. In his mind Tommy prayed Tubbo had gotten away, hoping for nothing more than his friend's, *brother's*, safety.

Even if it meant he didn't get away.

The side of his face stung.

He'd be fine.

Tubbo was going as fast as he could. He wasn't sure if he was shaking, it was hard to tell while running from someone with legs nearly twice the length of yours. He tried to get away quickly, not wanting to go with Dream. The ram hybrid hated the idea of leaving Tommy with him, but he was terrified of the masked man. And Tommy had told him to run. He was doing the right thing- but he left Tommy with that *monster*.

Tommy would be fine, Dream wouldn't hurt him, they'd save him quickly anyways.

He just had to get to dad.

Tubbo tripped on a branch and fell.

The hybrid stopped beside him, and he scrambled away, moving back onto his feet. Tubbo looked up at him with wide eyes, and he felt a small amount of sympathy. The hybrid was told to run after him, and Tubbo could only guess he wasn't doing it completely out of free will. It was like looking in a mirror, seeing his younger self. Quick to obey orders without question to save himself the trouble of another bruise to add to the collection.

He didn't want to cause the hybrid any more bruises, assuming he really was like Tubbo. Yet- he couldn't go with Dream. He couldn't let himself fall into that again, he had to save himself. Before he could save Tommy, before he could save this other hybrid.

So when the other moved forward, he smacked his hand away and pushed past him, rubbing as fast as he could towards the reception. Ranboo turned to follow, but the ram hybrid had

disappeared into the bushes. His tail curled around his leg, and a small whimper erupted from his throat.

He looked around for a few minutes before accepting defeat. Before.. accepting punishment. Ranboo trembled at the thought. He last punishment was bad, *very bad*, but he deserved it. He told his dad no, that was bad, *Ranboo was bad*. So he deserved it.

Even if he cried when he saw the bruises this morning. Even if Dream didn't apologize for going to far *he usually did when he left marks that weren't on his hands*.

It was okay, he deserved it.

Ranboo walked back, ears and eyes lowered dreadfully yet he didn't dare stall by walking slow. Papa was probably already upset he took this long, and to come back empty handed..

"Ranboo, where the fuck is Tubbo?" Dream snapped, he looked up suddenly, the hybrid hadn't even realized he stumbled back across the other too. He fidgeted, rubbing his hands together for a few moments before sucking in a shaky breath.

"He got away" the hybrid admitted, letting his eyes flicked to Tommy for a moment. He knew who the younger boys were, Dream said they were his brothers. They were Ranboo's family, and they'd be joining him and Dream. He had originally smiled at the thought of company, the castle got lonely sometimes without Dream.

But papa said they weren't going to stay at the caste.

And Ranboo knew they weren't really his brothers.

Dream stepped away from Tommy, towards Ranboo and the boy was on his knees instantly, eyes returning to the floor before Dream even commanded it. "I'm sorry sir, he was- he was just running so fast I- it's my fault. I'm sorry" he explained quickly, and Tommy's eyebrows scrunched together.

Dream walked over to him, and grabbed Ranboo's jaw. Time stood still for a moment, more dread settling into the hybrid's stomach. He fucked up, he fucked up bad. Ranboo knew his one job was to get Tubbo, Dream trusted him and he failed! His dad's fingers dug painfully into his skin, but Ranboo didn't speak nor make a sound.

He deserved it.

"What the fuck did you say?"

Tubbo stumbled out of the trees. He was pretty sure the other hybrid stopped following him, but he never lessened his pace just to be sure. A few of the guests looked at him in surprise. He wasn't sure if it was because he was breathing heavy, or shaking, or the fact tears were streaming down his face but he didn't pay it any mind as he continued.

He spotted his and Tommy's family together and Tubbo sobbed gently, ignoring the looks from the guests. He latched onto his dad's waist before any of them could react or say anything, crying into the man's expensive suit. His own personal one was dirty and a little scratched up from the escape. He felt Schlatt jump, a little surprised. "Tubs?" Arms wrapped around him, holding him close as he cried. "What happened?"

Tubbo shook his head, not looking up as he sobbed. Quackity moved closer, frowning and he set his hand on Tubbo's shoulder, rubbing circles with his thumb. Tubbo was safe, Dream couldn't get him. But Dream still had "Tommy" he pulled away, looking up at the older ram hybrid. "Dad- dad he has Tommy, Dream he- he has Tommy" the boy choked out between the whimpers and sobs, tears increasing with each word.

The adults all fell into a surprised silence until Phil's voice broke it

"Dream *what?*"

Late night sorrows, early morning plans

Chapter Summary

Ahh I'm trying to update regularly again

I have another story coming out too, soon soon 🙄🙄

Techno and Wilbur were both curled in the library, skimming through books quickly. The twins were trying to learn as much as they could about the red vines, about the portal, Dream, anything they thought would help. Tommy disappeared a week ago, and neither of them had slept much. Neither did Phil, and Schlatt said Tubbo was having trouble sleeping as well. They all worried for the winged boy.

By the time they had gotten to the spot where Dream was with Tommy, there was no trace of them. Tubbo gave a panicked retelling, between the sobs, of Dream and another hybrid. They were a little surprised to hear about the other hybrid, and Phil was especially worried when Tubbo mentioned the bruises.

They'd continue searching. Manberg and the antarctic empire sent out guards, and the families were sent into yet another situation of missing one of their own. Wilbur couldn't help but wonder how many times they'd have to do this. How many times he'd have to lose his baby brother to someone they once considered a friend. Someone Phil considered a friend, anyways, because Phil was always blindly trusting people who hurt his kids. Dream, and *her-*

Okay, perhaps that was an unfair conclusion for the younger twin to come to, but he was angry and he just wanted his brother back. *Again*. He knew that they were trying their best to keep the two boys safe, they couldn't just lock them up in a protective bubble for their whole lives, but Wilbur felt like they could have at least done something more. Techno could have gone with them, instead of constantly letting them go off on their own. At the wedding, and to pick flowers, they weren't helpless but they're *kids*, kids with a crazy powerful man willing to abuse them, looking for them.

Of course, now they had to deal with the spread of random red vines throughout the kingdom as well. The twins wondered if it would ever be over. Wilbur didn't think so.

Phil walked in and they both looked up. Techno went right back to his book, while Wilbur leaned against his seat and tried to return Phil's strained smile. "Hey Dadza." The younger twin mumbled. Phil walked over and ran his fingers through Wilbur's hair, before pulling his head against his chest. Wilbur's shoulders dropped, and he leaned against the king's chest.

Phil continued to pet his hair, looking over at Techno, and he sighed "you two should get some rest" he spoke slowly, as if all three of them didn't have matching eye bags that were beginning to look like a deep shade of purple. Techno scoffed, not moving from his book while Wilbur frowned.

He wanted to find Tommy as soon as possible, of course, but Phil's hand in his hair was so gentle. The man was finding it increasingly harder to keep his heavy eyelids lifted, the weight of his terrible sleep schedule in the last few days was becoming increasingly harder to bear. With each second that ticked by, and each time Phil's sharp talon like nails grazed against his scalp, Wilbur was more and more sure he could drop into the nearest bed and fall right asleep.

But Tommy.

They had to find Tommy, he couldn't sleep- Phil's hand paused and sighed heavily. "Tommy is a priority, but you two can't keep up like this. Searching when you can barely keep your eyes open is no more productive then not searching at all. Just- please, take a small break and sleep."

He saw Techno shift where he sat. Wilbur looked back up at Phil, head titling back against his chest, and the king's eyes worker their way down to his face. A moment of silence passed between them, a mutual understanding of longing and grief. Wilbur missed his brother. Phil missed his son.

Techno stood, slamming his book down as he grunted and the other two in the room jumped. Wilbur looked at his twin with concern. He could tell Techno was frustrated, they all were. Always wanting to save everyone, save his family, Techno may act big and tough but he had a big heart and cared more about his family then himself. No amount of wishing for Tommy could get him back, however.

“Every minute we sit here being useless, and every minute we spend sleeping is another Tommy spends with Dream” Techno grumbled, sighing as he rubbed the sleep from his eyes. His voice lowered to a barely audible tone, and he looked directly at their dad. “The second we find him, I’m going to kill him.”

Phil had originally been opposed to killing Dream, not telling the twins why. It’s why he was locked up in the first place, something about a trial but they never got the full detail. Yet now he sighed gently, nodding “I think there’s a line of people who would want to be the one to do so, but as long as he is dead I suppose it’s good enough.”

Phil looked at Techno with tired eyes. The king was tired of his kids being hurt, tired of letting people do so. He just wanted them to be safe. He’d do nearly anything for such.

Anything.

“Please tech” Wilbur stood up too, moving away from Phil’s warmth as he shared a look with his twin. “We’ll find Tommy as soon as possible but, Dadza’s right. We should probably sleep, for a little while.”

They all stood silently, techno’s eyes moving slowly between his twin and his father until he caved. “Fine” he stepped forward, messy hair falling in his face, his braid starting to come undone. Wilbur would have to fix it later.

Phil let them sit in the sad silence for all of 10 seconds before breaking it “alright, c’mere you two” he motioned with his arms. Wilbur, who was right next to him, took the invitation instantly and hugged Phil tight. Techno followed suit after a moment of hesitation, and his wings wrapped forward around his sons. Their family was... a little strained right now. But Phil was determined to hold on tight to the two sons he still had and look tirelessly for his youngest.

“We’ll find Tommy again” he promised, needing the hug from them just as much as they needed a hug from their father. The three leaned against each other, just like they always had and always will. “We have to”

Techno hugged Phil tight, glancing at Wilbur. The twins shared a knowing look, and a wave of understanding passed between them. He let himself relax in his fathers arms for now, but when they woke up..

They had so much work to do

Playing pretend

Chapter Summary

Consistent posting schedule? Who is she

Sorry again this took so long. I've been sitting in a Mc Donald's parking lot for the past 20 minutes finishing this chapter while eating a burger on top of trying to delay going to my mother's house for Mother's Day. On that note, happy Mother's Day I guess unless you're weird and your timezone is already the next day or you're reading this later. If so.. happy not Mother's Day and drink water or something.

Also this isn't proofread I really don't have the time, I'll fix it up later so ignore the typos if there are any.

<3

Tommy sat curled up in a small room. He wasn't brought to a fake house, a fake cabin, or even a fake bedroom. No, when they got to Dream's base (whenever that was) he was dragged into a small cramped gray room with no way out. It was nearly a prison cell, save for the iron bars.

The door was metal, and unlocked with a key that Dream had. Neither of the two had spoken to him. The hybrid, Ranboo he later learned, had kept his head down the whole time and his tail wrapped around himself. Tommy found himself feeling pity for the hybrid, it reminded him of how Tubbo looked when he was going to get beat and, knowing Dream, he feared the taller would face much the same.

He was dehydrated, he realized. Water nor food were a luxury he had access to at the moment, which left his throat feeling scratchy to the point it hurt to talk. Tommy wondered how long he'd be in this room alone. Dream had never treated him like this before, he'd never laid a hand on him. It was different now.

Before, in the cabin and even the second time he was taken he knew what buttons to press. Tommy knew how far to push, when to stop, and the consequences for certain actions. Not anymore. He was thrown into the middle of a mind field, blind and unsure where to go. He couldn't do anything now, but the second he was around Dream again he'd be afraid.

Tommy wasn't good at biting his tongue, keeping his thoughts to himself. He didn't have much of a filter. Sometimes it caused Tubbo to get punished, so he feared greatly what it could cause him now that Dream was willing to hurt him. Unless, perhaps, that was a one time thing. A silly though, desperate hope he could hold onto for ease of mind. Dream had

said he wouldn't hurt Tommy, after all... but it wouldn't be the first time Dream lied or went back on a promise.

He'd tried kicking at the door already, asking for help but unsurprisingly to no avail. No one helped, no one came, Tommy was just happy Tubbo got to safety. He couldn't watch him get hurt, not again.

He heard footsteps, and looked at the door. The room wasn't very soundproof, he could only wonder if they heard his cries after all and decided to ignore him. Since Dream put him here anyways, he supposed ignoring him should be expected. The door opened, and that tall hybrid from before stood bent down in the doorway looking down at him. Tommy held his breath as they met eyes. There was a big bruise on his face, had that one been there before?

Ranboo stepped back from the doorway silently and Tommy took the opportunity to stand back up and step out. The other hybrid looked nervous as he did so, and closed the door slowly. Tommy tried to ignore the way he reminded him of Tubbo. Ranboo stood awkwardly, rubbing his hands together before he spoke "um, Papa- er to you Dream he uh wants you- us to eat dinner. With him."

Tommy looked up at him, *fuck he is tall*, and frowned. There it was again, 'papa', was this Dream's son? They looked nothing alike, but perhaps he was stolen too. Just like him, just like Tubbo.. when Phil came to save him maybe he'd have to convince his father to save Ranboo too. Deeming Ranboo safe, he smiled "Is Dream too much of a pussy to eat alone?"

Silence passed. Ranboo looked more confused then entertained by his joke. Tommy laughed awkwardly, smile dropping. No maybe not completely like Tubbo. Ranboo's head tilted to the side "a what?"

Tommy shook his head, not exactly willing to explain that to him "nothing, nothing don't worry about it big man" he glanced down the hallway, wondering how old Ranboo was but he didn't bother asking. He was tall, but he didn't seem very old. "So where are we eating dinner then Ranboo?"

Ranboo stood baffled. Tommy was odd, very odd. The way he held himself, spoke, the nicknames. 'Pussy' 'big man' he spoke such foreign words so casually. Perhaps he'd have to ask papa what they meant. His ears twitched, before he turned and began to walk. "This way" Ranboo muttered wanting to get back to Dream as soon as he could. Nothing against Tommy of course. Ranboo was just.. uncomfortable around anyone but his Papa. Even with someone Papa said was a friend. *Why were they keeping his friend locked up?* He shook his head, as if to rid the thoughts from his head. He shouldn't question his papa.

They walked in silence together, not that either of them wanted anything but. They both trailed off on their minds, similar thoughts through different points of view. The two had grown up with the same man, yet their worlds seemed so far apart and different that just interacting with eachother brought a sense of the unknown. Tommy shifted his wings to sit against his back behind him and he tried to keep himself from being nervous as they got closer to Dream. Dinner? Just eating dinner sounded normal.. maybe he wouldn't be hurt. Maybe neither of them would.

Entering the next room his worry faded. Dream was already sitting at the table, looking a little impatient but otherwise passive. Ranboo's ears lifted at the sight of Dream. His tail wagged and his pace increased a little as he moved quickly to sit by Dream. Tommy tried to ignore that. It made his stomach flip, the boy seemed so happy to see the man who hurt him. Tommy was once happy to see him, too.

Tommy was slower to sit down, silence passing over them. He'd moved further in the minefield now, the concentration of the bombs only growing in proportion. Dream slid off his mask, the click of the little fastening in the back filling the room and the continued silence after was suffocating. They were playing house, yet again, Tommy mused as Dream set down the mask.

It was always pretend with Dream. From the fake smile on his mask, to his entire childhood all conjured up for his little game. It was hard to tell how much was genuine with Dream. We're the smiles on his face fake too? We're all of the goodnight kisses and bedtime stories out of an ultimate goal rather than actually caring about Tommy? How much of his life was wasted trying to appease someone who didn't seem to care about him? He'd think, lies or not, being raised by Dream would give them some sort of relationship. But it was gone now, thrown away. He was just a pawn, a tool used to reach his goal. Was he ever anything more?

"I'm glad you finally made it" Dream smiled, grabbing his fork. "I waited for you two to start eating." Truthfully, his plate was full. He hadn't touched the food. This made Tommy look down at his own, glancing over the food and the sick feeling in his gut only increased. Not because it looked gross, quite the opposite and that was part of the problem. Dream cooked well, he really did and Tommy hated it. Why make Tubbo cook so young when he was perfectly capable. And furthermore his favorite dish staring up at him was more mocking than comforting. Was he supposed to be happy that Dream did the bare minimum, cooked him his favorite meal? Was he supposed to be grateful, was this supposed to make up for everything? The hitting, the kidnapping? If he expected any of the such, Dream would only be severely disappointed. Tommy didn't plan on forgiving him or falling for the manipulation. Not this time.

Ranboo began eating, and he realized his spiraled thoughts left him as the only one who hadn't. So despite the newfound resentment, he began eating as well. It was best to play along while he was hungry and in need of food. He could piss Dream off later. There was even a cup next to his plate which he downed quickly after spotting.

Dream asked him questions over dinner. Ones about his family, the Antarctic empire. Tommy wasn't an idiot. He knew Dream didn't care about the casual talk, he didn't give a shit about how Tommy felt in his real home. He just wanted to know possible ways to attack. Perhaps hoping a weakness would accidentally be woven into the tale, a loose thread Tommy didn't even think about letting slip through his fingers.

For once Tommy thought carefully about what he said. He didn't want to reveal anything to Dream. He'd have to torture it out of him, he wasn't planning on helping the bastard do anything so he held his tongue over certain topics.

Ranboo remained quiet, unless he was spoken to and he perked up happily babbling on to Dream. It was weird, how Dream certainly seemed to actually care. His responses were

genuine and the interactions between the two.. they didn't seem fake. But Dream hurt Ranboo surely it couldn't have been real. Dream couldn't care, not actually, he hurt Ranboo and dad always said that if Dream cared he wouldn't have hurt him or Tubbo. But.. Ranboo looked so happy. His smile only brightened from Dream's attention. It was confusing.

They finished their food, Dream turning the conversation back to Tommy and Ranboo stood up to collect the plates. He decided to save the hybrid the distress, waiting till he was gone. The second Ranboo was out of the room, his small forced smile dropped and he decided to cut the bullshit. Tommy looked Dream dead in the eyes, glaring at him. "Why the fuck did you take me again you bitch? You're obsession with stealing kids is real creepy you know."

The silence this time was different. It was tense, worse than the original awkward silence from when they entered. He could tell Dream was angered even though the elder tried his best to keep such emotions from his face. They stared each other down, a silent stand off and Ranboo unfortunately reentered the room as Dream spoke

"Because I care about you, Tommy. Stop being such a brat." He hated that word. He hated being called a brat, a child, rebellious or whatever the fuck Dream deemed fit for his actions. He wasn't such, he certainly wasn't a child. Not one that would fall for manipulation, not one that needed coddled or protective. Perhaps he was sensitive to this from both sides of the coin. Phil was an amazing dad, but even he was flawed.

Ranboo's smile dropped. He looked between Tommy and Dream, standing by the doorway as his tail wrapped around his leg. He was too nervous to move further into the room. Papa sounded angry, Tommy looked angry too. We're they going to fight? Was Tommy going to get punished?

Tommy scoffed, looking away "you don't care about me. You never did" it hurt to admit. It hurt to face what he was sure was the truth, even if he was certain of it. Because there had been a time when Tommy cared about Dream. A time where he was known as his brother, when Tommy loved Dream and was happy to see him. But it seemed now none of it mattered. His relations were fake, all of his misplaced admiration and love useless. The preexisting world in the cabin was something they could never go back to. It didn't matter how many times he got kidnapped.

Dream knew it too.

This game of cat and mouse was rather pointless. They'd never be brothers. Not again, though perhaps they never really were. Maybe that was why Dream hit him then. Maybe that was why there was no cabin, or why Dream didn't say anything back. He had no defense, just a heavy sigh.

That wasn't what he wanted. Tommy wanted to take it back, the small childish side of him wanted Dream to deny it. To say he cared. He didn't.

Instead he stood, walking to the doorway. He ruffled Ranboo's hair, *Tommy noticed the flinch*, and paused just outside the door. "We're friends, Tommy. Maybe not actual brothers, but I still raised you and I still have your best interest in mind. I just want what's best for

you” Dream spoke slow, before leaving the room. No one said anything after that, the door clicking closed by the time he’d even processed the information enough to retort.

Ranboo looked happy. It was like the affection was a switch, making him giddy from attention so subtle as ruffling his hair. Tommy wouldn’t hold it against him. He understood. So when Ranboo came over, apologetically leading him back to the small room he didn’t bother taking his frustration out on the boy. Instead he smiled, thanked him, and gave him a quick side hug. Ranboo looked surprised, but he didn’t question it as he closed the door and left Tommy alone in the room again. The lock clicked and Tommy decided then and there. He’d have to get them out. Not just himself, but Ranboo too.

Protection

Chapter Summary

:)

The king had lost count of how many search parties went out by then. It had been over two weeks, each day passing by marked more sorrow and grief filling the hearts of nearly the whole kingdom. There wasn't a soul inside the tall proud walls Phil had worked to build that didn't know about the disappearance of the young prince. The details evaded the public's eye, but the pain was felt all the same from the bakers and the fisherman to the angel of death and the twins themselves.

Tubbo was by far one of the most distraught. The poor boy had cried, basically screamed and begged for Schlatt to save Tommy when the boy was taken again. It didn't matter how much effort they put into the search, how many forests they searched and mountains they scaled, each time the search parties were left empty handed. Their maps had become spreads of black ink, covering the regions they'd already searched, the places they had left to check were running low. Even Dream's kingdom, which Phil had successfully taken over with Techno leading the army, had been searched top to bottom and there was no sign of his youngest anywhere.

The sheer stress certainly wasn't helping. Phil, Techno, and Wilbur all had endured their fair share of worry and stress over the situation, snapping and sharp tongues became a little too common between them. They loved each other, of course, and they knew that despite the small arguments, the disappearance was weighing heavily on their shoulders and they all just longed to have the baby bird back in its nest, safe and sound again. The constant repetition of having Tommy's presence in their lives returned only to be torn away again was tiring and taking its toll.

Schlatt and Quackity had taken turns helping in the search, though most of the time they opted to have one of them stay at home with Tubbo. They'd become a little more protective of him, knowing Dream was out there somewhere wanting to take him back.

It was rare for the twins and their father to be in a search party together, rather they usually opted to lead their own individual ones. Phil didn't search much either. While he longed to, and his wings twitched and he stared for long periods of time out of the window just wishing he could be out there saving his son, being there king was a demanding position.

The three were in a search party this time, along with a few guards. They were tired, spirits were low. No one wanted to be optimistic, the disappointment following fruitless efforts was more bearable that way. And perhaps if they'd known what they were about to find, they'd have walked faster, they'd have brought a few more weapons.

Tommy wasn't sure how much more of this he could take. His wings ached, feather after feather, had been plucked for Dream's weird science experiment. It had only taken a few hits for him to learn not to complain about that, though. He tried not to think about Tubbo being silenced the same way, with even harsher slaps at a younger age, his mind always circled back to the thought. Because Tubbo had been under Dream's heavy hand in a way Tommy would never understand, could never understand. The hits, a tiny glimpse into the pain and horrors his pseudo brother had been exposed to for so long.

When he was younger, he liked to think of himself as Tubbo's older brother. He wanted to be like Dream. While Dream had made it clear Tubbo wasn't their brother, it didn't stop his tiny childlike mind from wandering. He was bigger than Tubbo anyways, so naturally it made sense he would be the older one. He still sometimes refused to believe it was anything otherwise.

He wanted to protect Tubbo. Dream protected him, Dream was cool and Tommy's role model, he'd have done anything to be like him. Tubbo was small and meek, Tommy thought he was protecting him when he'd bandaged his mysterious knee scrape, or ice a bruise that came from playing. Surely Dream would have done so, he did it for Tommy, but he was busy. So Tommy took the role.

But he never protected Tubbo, not really. He never stopped the abuse, even when he heard it. Even when the only thing between him and his brother, who he *promised* he'd protect, was a door, a wall, a choice, Tommy always remained frozen.

It was always the other way around. It was always Tubbo protecting him, fitting as the oldest. It was always Tubbo taking the blame, even though his punishment would be much worse. And Tubbo taking the abuse, taking Dream's wrath leaving Tommy with a somewhat normal childhood. Tubbo always protected Tommy.

Tubbo wasn't here this time.

And Ranboo couldn't protect him. He'd never expect him to anyways, and Tommy wasn't a coward. If anything, Tommy wanted to protect him. Ranboo was much taller, and seemed to be on better terms with Dream than Tommy, but his condition was far worse. Between the now faded bruises, and his nervousness and off quirks Tommy had noticed, he could tell Ranboo needed help.

His mind as foggy. The boy was so far into the manipulation, nearly farther than Tommy and Tubbo had ever been. He saw it in every tail wag, every ear flick and smile, every time he longed for Dream's validation and love. He saw the way Dream gave it to him, scratching his ears and chin as if he was a cat, giving kisses to his forehead that reminded Tommy of the way Phil would have done it for him. And he praised Ranboo, when the boy was doing good and met his expectations, that alone was enough to make Ranboo melt.

He'd seen the uglier sides of it too. He'd seen Dream yell at Ranboo, scream at him over an honest mistake. He obviously didn't mean to trip, but Dream hadn't taken kindly to Ranboo's stumbling and stuttering apology, his explanation. Dream's response was to only get angrier, yelling for Ranboo to get the stick. Tommy's stomach had twisted, unsure of what that was. Ranboo hand scampered off, Tommy was ordered to go to his cell, the situation was *too familiar for comfort*. It was a couple of days later when Ranboo was told to get the stick again, when Tommy wasn't ordered to leave the room and he saw firsthand what it was. It was no wonder Ranboo's hands were so messed up and bruised, it was no wonder his ears lowered down completely and he whimpered when Dream mentioned it. Dream didn't need a slap to silence him, Ranboo had already been beaten so badly just a threat was enough.

Tommy wasn't sure why Dream always resorted to violence. He seemed to genuinely care about Ranboo, he noticed the way his eyes crinkled when Ranboo was happy, and while he hated to consider it, maybe dream really saw him as a son. And maybe it made him a tad jealous. But he wouldn't admit to it.

Ranboo was so desperate for Dream's approval, Tommy was sure he'd follow whatever Dream ordered him to do without the need of threats. And sure, Ranboo wasn't perfect, but mistakes were human and Dream was wrong to expect such. Ranboo didn't seem to get that. He hated seeing him apologize for mistakes, apologize for things he shouldn't have to apologize for. His apologies were robotic yet, somehow, genuine. Like an instinct wired into his brain, one he may never have the luxury of recovering from.

Escape seemed impossible. Especially if he wanted Ranboo to go. He knew Ranboo needed to, it wasn't a question of if, rather how. Because Tommy would never forgive himself if he left him here, even if Ranboo didn't want to leave at first.

He wasn't sure how they'd manage it. Beyond the complication that Ranboo didn't want to leave, Tommy hadn't seen a possible exit once.

Tommy was sitting with Ranboo. He'd gotten a little more freedom, he wasn't forced into his cell as much as he had been in the past rather he was allowed to wander a bit with Ranboo or Dream by his side. He always chose the former when he was an option. Not only did he want to avoid Dream as much as possible, but he found himself enjoying Ranboo's presence. The boy may have been quiet at times, only speaking when spoken to, but when they were alone and Tommy had prompted him he could ramble on about the different books he read.

Tommy wasn't particularly interested, but it was nice at times to just listen to him talk. To give Ranboo the ability to speak without fear of being reprimanded, to slowly work him out of the shell Dream had boxed him into.

It was quiet between them then. Dream had been angry earlier, yelling and such, which of course was never a good thing. Tommy couldn't remember exactly, he'd already tried to push it from his mind from the second he raised his voice to the slap- *the* slap.

Tommy's stomach knots just thinking about it. He'd been slapped by Dream recently, of course, and he'd heard and seen Dream slap Tubbo. But this time, with Ranboo, it seemed worse. Because he watched the way Ranboo's ears turn down as Dream raised his voice. The small flinched and barely audible whimpers as Dream gestured violently with his angered

speech, the words falling jumbled together and meaningless to Tommy but the tone was still sharp and ever clear. Ranboo had stumbled back as Dream approached, shaking like a leaf as Tommy's heels dug into the floor, willing himself to stay still.

Maybe it was the fear in Ranboo's eyes that wouldn't leave his mind, a child looking at their father, the one meant to protect him, eyes flicking between Dream's eyes and his hands, waiting to be hurt as the anticipation and dread grew with each step back. Each quiet rushed sorry, apology after apology for a crime he never committed. He watched Ranboo flinch back into the wall, eyes squeezing shut as he braced for Dream's hit to land as his hand was raised back.

The sound was just as horrific as the visuals playing in front of him. He wished he could have turned off his vision and hearing, he didn't want to see Ranboo so scared. So vulnerable. While Tommy just watched, helplessly. Tommy remained frozen as Ranboo's head snapped to the side, the boy falling to his knees instantly, he clung onto Dream's pant legs, hands curled in tight trembling balls as he apologized more, sobbing now begging to be forgiven by Dream.

Ranboo hadn't done anything wrong.

He hadn't done a thing. And perhaps that was the worst part. Dream's angry speech, from the bits and pieces Tommy remembered from the beginning, had nothing to do with Ranboo. It was Tommy's fault. It was Tommy's fault he was angry, *Tommy's fault Ranboo got hit*.

Yet Ranboo apologized. And he was genuine about it. He wasn't apologizing to avoid Dream's hit, he wasn't apologizing to save himself. Dream had already 'punished' him. He was begging for forgiveness, he was apologizing because in his mind, he had done something wrong. There didn't have to be a reason, Ranboo didn't need proof. If Dream deemed he'd done something, if Dream decided to punish him then well, Ranboo was at fault. Ranboo needed to apologize, he needed to earn forgiveness. But he hadn't even done anything.

He watched Dream sink to the floor, pulling the mess Ranboo was into a hug. A moment that looked nearly loving if you ignored the way more scars burned onto Ranboo's face from the tears, the white side of his face marked from the slap, or the way Dream's face remained emotionless as he pet Ranboo's hair. Tommy remained silent and frozen through it all, doubts festering in his mind over the possibility of Ranboo's recovery.

Dream had left physical and mental scars on both him and Tubbo. Tommy knew this. Their trauma would always be a part of them. But they recovered. Tubbo doesn't flinch, Tommy stopped playing down his own abuse. They'd healed, they'd grown. He wanted the same for Ranboo, if anyone deserved it, he did. But Ranboo was so far gone, so deep in the cycle Tommy wasn't sure if it was possible. He wanted to believe it was, but as he stared at the mark on Ranboo's face later, his only thoughts were doubt.

The quiet was nice, welcoming to the two boys. Neither wanted to speak, they'd feel obligated to talk about what happened with Dream, and neither wanted to address it. The unspoken acknowledgment to it was uncomfortable enough. Tommy's thoughts were cut short by the door slamming open. They both flinched, Ranboo looking up with wide eyes, Dream came into the room frantically ordering them up.

Tommy didn't understand why, he wasn't sure what was happening as Dream grabbed his arm roughly and started to drag him. Ranboo followed close behind, not needing to be told twice as they went down the hall. His confused thoughts were answered as they went around the corner, and standing on the other side was his dad and his brothers, along with a few guards wearing the Antarctic empire uniform.

Tommy's eyes widened, and he met his father's eyes, noticing the relief that filled them. Dream growled, stepping back with him, he hadn't expected them to be this way. Tommy's heart lifted, finding himself subconsciously trying to step towards his father, towards his family, towards *love*.

Dream's hand remained tight on his arm, a silent standoff settling over them. Phil's soft look, the kind eyes promising to save him, promising love and protection to his youngest's desperate eyes slowly shifted over to Dream's and a scowl filled his face immediately.

Dream stepped back again, pulling Tommy who whimpered and struggled to try and get away. The guards drew their swords as Ranboo looked confused, eyes moving between Dream and the others. His ears lowered, feeling overwhelmed by the growing tension of the conflict. It didn't help Dream's angry eyes turning to him, Ranboo's anxiety spiking even further at that. A silent conversation passed between them, and as Tommy blinked Ranboo disappeared and reappeared by the guard. His hand sat on the guard's shoulder, and suddenly Tommy was being thrown back behind Dream, leaving the green man between him and his family as he hit the ground roughly before Ranboo teleported back with the guard.

Dream had the sword from the guard's hand in seconds, and he blocked techno's attack. Techno had drawn his sword as Dream threw Tommy back. The two started to sword fight, going back and forth with attacks and blocks. Their swords clashed, a loud sound of metal scraping together filled the hall. Ranboo cringed at the sound, covering his ears. He didn't notice the swords being his from their owner's hands. He felt the sword fall at his feet, he didn't hear Dream's command for him to throw the sword over because of his covered ears. He heard it when Dream screamed at him though, his hands falling from his ears as he looked at Dream with wide eyes, embarrassment filling his face before he scrambled to pick up the sword. Techno's was even farther back behind Tommy, out of reach.

The only sword sat in Ranboo's trembling hands, the world was too loud and Dream continued to yell at him to give him the sword. Tears filled Ranboo's eyes at the harsh words, the eyes staring at him there were *too many* .

Tommy's voice broke through the static and the voices for a moment, calling his name and Ranboo paused.

He glanced at Tommy, prompting for the first time in his life, a *choice* . A side. To give Dream the sword or not. He didn't think as he stepped away from Dream, *it wasn't his fault Dream approached*, Dream's yelling hadn't stopped *he couldn't tell how much was real and how much was in his head*. He didn't notice Phil's eyes on him, he didn't notice the way he screwed his own shut just wanting everything to **stop** .

Papa was mad, papa was yelling he was going to be in trouble, he didn't want to be in trouble, or punished, or hit. He wanted to be good, he could be good, stop- he just wanted it

to stop it was too loud there was too much going on too many eyes just be good he a good boy for papa he was mad he's going to punish you just be good just stop stop **give me the sword Ranboo! JUST GIVE HIM THE SWORD.**

The sword was pushed forward without a thought. The blade pierced through Dream's chest as he pushed it towards him, the boy didn't notice after until, he slowly peaked his scared eyes open to look down and see blood dripping down the sword, down onto his hand. He moved his eyes up, meeting Dream's eyes. It went silent.

Ranboo gasped, pulling the sword out in a naive attempt to undo what he'd done. "P-papa" he stuttered, voice breaking on the one word as he nearly sobbed. There was blood, *so much blood*, and Dream stared at him with an intense betrayal in his eyes. He didn't mean- he didn't mean to do that.

Dream tore the sword from his hands, calling Ranboo more names, laughing about his stupid attempts at disobedience, *he wasn't trying to disobey, Dream wanted the sword, Ranboo just wanted to be good*, Dream insisted about him being a God, how a hybrid as *useless* as Ranboo couldn't kill him. He didn't move as Dream raised the sword to strike back, he couldn't. He.. disobeyed. He should be punished. Papa was going to punish him, there was so much blood.

He felt arms wrap around him as the blade moved down, wings forming a protective wall providing Ranboo a shield from the sword. It sliced through gray feathers instead, the cries and screams of the Angel of Death's sons could be heard as his wing went limp, followed by the tip of the sword slicing deep at the king's side.

End Notes

Fanfics that take place in this universe but are written by other authors

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